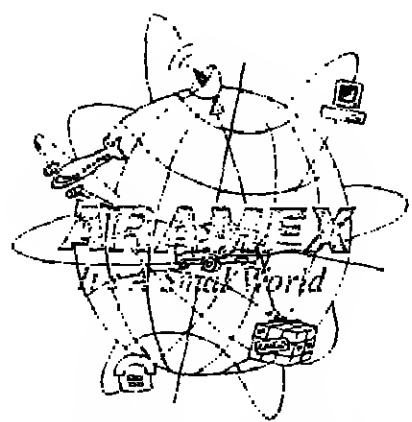


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Turkish president warns against military coup

By Edward Mortimer

ANKARA—Elections, not a military coup, would be the right solution to Turkey's political crisis, according to President Suleyman Demirel.

Mr. Demirel, twice deposed as prime minister by the armed forces in 1971 and 1980, said this week there was no reason to fear another coup. But he went on, in an interview with the Financial Times, to give what sounded like a warning to the army not to stage one. And he lamented that the constitution does not give him power to dissolve parliament. "I would do it now," he said, because the behavior of politicians in the present parliament was "degrading democracy."

As the president spoke, the uneasy stand-off continued between the army and the Islamist prime minister, Mr. Necmettin Erbakan. On Monday Mr. Erbakan had to preside over a special session of the Supreme Military Council and countersign orders dismissing a number of army officers accused of harboring political views broadly similar to his own.

The government, which narrowly survived a parliamentary challenge last week, has since suffered further defections from its secular component, the True Path party, whose leader, deputy prime minister and foreign minister Mrs. Tansu Ciller, faces a spreading revolt against her leadership.

The two parties are unlikely to reach agreement on an extension of compulsory state education, which the armed forces have demanded to counter the influence of religious schools, an issue which is bound to come up again on Saturday when political and military leaders meet, under Mr. Demirel's chairmanship, in the National Security Council. In the interview, Mr. Demirel defended the council's role, claiming: "When soldiers sit there they are not soldiers any more." The government would have no excuse for not implementing its recommendations, he said, since senior ministers including Mr. Erbakan and Mrs. Ciller were members of it and had signed its decisions. "If they are not able to implement it, either they should not have signed, or they should resign," he said.

The president insisted that all problems would be resolved democratically according to the constitution, and that there was no need for a coup. The armed forces, he pointed out, "have intervened three times in political matters" (in 1960, 1971 and 1980) "and it didn't work. They were not able to solve any problem. On the contrary, our difficulties were increased." Indeed, he said, Turkey's present problems were largely due to the fragmentation of its political structure caused by the coup of 1980.

Financial Times News Service

Government and JPA meet, but neither is in a mood for compromise

By Raed Al Abed

Star Staff Writer

TENSION BETWEEN the government and the press body has eased after the two sides held talks Monday to discuss repercussions of the new press law, which the government had issued last week. Both sides said the crisis had ended but it was not clear yet what the next move will be. The Jordan Press Association (JPA) insists on changing or suspending some articles in the amended law while the government says the only party authorized to do that will be the new parliament.

Drastic amendments to the 1993 Press and Publication Law were imposed unilaterally by the government through a temporary law last week.

The new law sparked protests from various sides inside and outside Jordan. The JPA and the rest of the country's 13 professional associations and 11 opposition parties and human rights organizations considered the new law, which was ratified by a Royal Decree, as a setback to the democratic process.

But while the heads of most professional unions opted to challenge the government through extreme measures, including mass resignations by the heads of these unions, the JPA preferred to initiate dialogue with the government. JPA President Mr. Saif Al Sharif described his meeting with Prime Minister Abdel Salam Al Majali Monday as "positive" and added that the prime minister "understood our demands and we understand



JPA council members meet Prime Minister Majali on Monday

the reasons behind releasing such a law." However Mr. Al Sharif stressed that "it was unreasonable to ignore the Press Association."

The outcome of the meeting sent positive signals as the JPA will submit a memo which will include suggested amendments to the new law. The premier promised to study these clarifications, at the same time he refused the Association's suggestion to freeze some articles in the new law.

Mr. Majali promised Mr. Sharif and the nine-member council of the association that while he might not freeze the law, the government might not

activate some of its articles.

Mr. Sharif believes that the crisis will not be over until the government adopts the suggested amendments of the association.

But the government spokesman says "the crisis was over a long time ago." Mr. Samir Mutawa, minister of state for information affairs, told reporters after Monday's meeting that the government was open to discussion with the press body. "They suggested a memo and we welcomed that," he said.

The general assembly of the JPA will hold a meeting on 6 June to discuss the new law and to come up with a proper course

of action. Some journalists expressed fears that the government might use its influence inside the 300-member body through the estimated 100 members of the state-owned Petra News Agency. They also say the government may exert pressure on JPA's members who work for Al Rai daily, since the government got to keep its 63 percent equity shares under the new law.

The manner with which the government has dealt with the press law has triggered reaction from opposition parties and professional associations, who

Continued on page 2

Dakamseh pleads not guilty as trial opens

AMMAN (Star)—Corporal Ahmed Dakamseh, who is accused of gunning down seven Israeli schoolgirls on 13 March in Bagoura area, has pleaded not guilty before a panel of five military judges who presided over his trial as it opened on Tuesday.

He could face the death penalty if convicted on charges that include premeditated murder, attempted murder, using a weapon and disobeying orders.

Dakamseh's lawyers maintain that he attacked the schoolgirls to protect his military honor.

The military prosecutor has submitted an indictment sheet that accused Dakamseh of carefully planning the murder.

One of Dakamseh's lawyers,

Ahmed Al Najdawi, protested against certain phrases in the indictment sheet that were read in court alleging that the defendant had made sexual remarks about one of the girls and was sexually aroused by their presence. He also objected to prosecutor's motion to hear a number of Israeli witnesses. Another lawyer, President of the Bar Association Hussein Mjali, called on the presiding judge Brigadier General Ma'moun Khasawneh to ensure a fair trial by allowing the defence to meet privately with the defendant.

The trial was attended by more than 200 people including the relatives of Dakamseh.

Continued on page 2



Court ruling keeps Clinton character issue in limelight

By Kevin Merida

WASHINGTON—President Clinton lost an opportunity Tuesday to remove one of the nagging legal controversies hovering over his presidency. The

Supreme Court's ruling that Paula Corbin Jones can pursue her sexual harassment lawsuit against Clinton while he is still in office keeps questions about the president's character swirling in the public arena.

Until resolved, the Jones case could be, in the words of one scholar, like "water dripping on a stone," detracting from Clinton's governing mission.

"It reopens and underscores and focuses on and exacerbates the whole question of this president's trustworthiness," said Robert Dallek, a Boston University history professor who is just completing his second volume of a biography of President Lyndon B. Johnson.

"My God, what a distraction," said Charles O. Jones, a University of Wisconsin political scientist. "It seems predictable with this fellow that whenever things are going good, there is a great big pothole in the road."

The court's decision comes at a time

when Clinton's political fortunes appear to be rising. He is currently in Paris trying to demonstrate his leadership in expanding the NATO alliance. He recently concluded a historic budget agreement with the Republican-controlled Congress. The economy is cruising steadily along. And public opinion polls show that a majority of American citizens have confidence in his leadership.

The Paula Jones ruling threatens to disrupt that, at least temporarily. "It's obviously going to create a great brouhaha for a while," said James Carville, a sometime adviser to the president, "and then it will settle

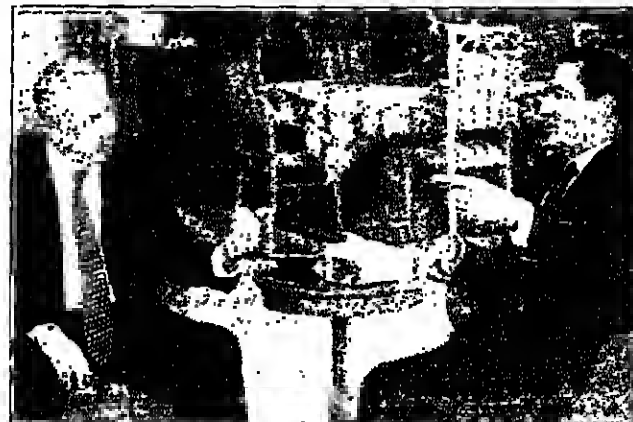
Continued on page 3

Egyptian-Israeli summit restores measure of civility, hope

By Barton Gellman

SHARM EL SHEIKH, Egypt—An Egyptian-Israeli summit meeting at this seaside resort restored a measure of civility and even warmth Tuesday between President Hosni Mubarak and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu but found no bridge for Netanyahu's gaping differences with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

Mubarak, who recently questioned Netanyahu's good faith and helped lead Arab efforts to ostracize his government, hosted the Israeli premier amiably Tuesday and avoided any hint of public criticism. A shared confidence of interests in repairing frayed ties, each for foreign-policy reasons of his own, brought an atmosphere in which Mubarak escorted his guest to a balcony overlooking Red Sea coral reefs and, with him, waved to Italian



Mubarak and Netanyahu during their meeting at Sharm El Sheikh Tuesday

tourists on the beach.

Beneath the scenes of camaraderie, the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks that Mubarak sought to mediate remained in their worst sustained crisis since the 1991 Madrid conference at which

they began.

Mubarak twice telephoned Arafat Tuesday to update him on his talks with the Israeli leader, but aides said Arafat is flatly rejecting any compromise.

Continued on page 2

Palestinians fighting battle for liberties with own government

By Marjorie Miller

RAMALLAH, West Bank—In the nascent state of Palestine, a popularly elected legislature meets weekly, debates sensitive national issues, and passes fundamental laws that are not implemented.

Alongside the official media, 22 private radio and television stations are licensed to broadcast in the Palestinian self-rule area, although they are routinely jammed, closed down and crowded into self-censorship.

Feris labor movements strike for better pay, as public school teachers did in March before their leaders were jailed for five days. And human rights activists denounce government abuses, despite the risk of arrests such as the one Dr. Eyad Sarraj suffered last year—17 days in solitary confinement and a beating that left him with a ruptured disk.

"It is not an easy thing to be free," said Sarraj, head of the Palestinian Independent Com-



Arafat and the deputies: On a short leash

mission for Citizens' Rights. "You have to fight for it. No authority is going to hand it to you on a golden platter."

In the nearly three years since Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority assumed power in the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank, Palestinian political activists, journalists, human rights groups and legislators have been working hard to build strong, democratic institutions that are independent of the central government.

And Arafat's Palestinian Authority has been working nearly as hard to stop them.

Three decades of Israeli military occupation made Palestinians eager for law and order and a government that is accountable to its citizens. They want a legislature that will balance the executive branch, and a civil society with the means to monitor abuses by security forces and alleged corruption by public officials.

Instead, Palestinian civic and political leaders say, Arafat has been unwilling to allow the Palestinian Legislative Council to develop any power of its own and has blocked its efforts to make law. They say the Palestinian Authority has engaged in a pattern of intimidation and arrests to stifle criticism and independent actions, which it views as a challenge to Arafat.

The Palestinian Authority is examining various strategies

for securing people and breaking down civil society," said Khader Shkeirat, director of the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment, in East Jerusalem.

"The arrest of activists is one strategy. Pushing nondemocratic laws is another. So is the creation of parallel networks of nongovernmental organizations. And restricting freedom of expression by arresting lawyers and journalists and closing media," Shkeirat said.

Repeated requests to speak with Arafat's spokesman, Nabil Abu Rudeinich, and other high-ranking Palestinian officials were unsuccessful. As a former guerrilla leader and chief of the Palestine Liberation Organization for more than 30 years, Arafat has never been one to engage in open and democratic decision-making. He is used to issuing orders; he has a long history of co-opting his opposition or destroying it.

Yet Arafat is not a dictator. He was elected as president of the Palestinian Authority by an overwhelming majority in January 1996, and polls show he is still the most popular Palestinian leader. Arafat has a broad-based political party, the Fatah stream of the PLO.

And by the standards of Arab states, he is not particularly repressive. While Arafat

Continued on page 2



Paula Jones

World Report

By Marwan Asmar
Star Staff Writer

Taybet Zaman

A place to relive history

TAYBET ZAMAN—A perfect romantic setting: the aurora, the hot brilliant sun bathing the arid mountains that dominate the landscape, the eternal serenity. You don't have to fly thousands of miles to reach this place. It is right here; a little village tucked away deep to the south of Jordan.

Nine kilometers southeast of Petra, the village of Taybet Zaman has been revived into a tourist resort to give only the best of traditional Jordanian hospitality.

Today, Taybet Zaman is a special place that preserves the spirit of the past. As you walk into the village, you go into another time, a period that was long forgotten.

In fact this was the exact idea behind creating Taybet Zaman. Property owners, Jordan Tourism Investments, succeeded in creating a unique atmosphere of the simple

rural life of yesteryear. To a foreign visitor the experience is an unforgettable one.

The old Taybet village was a 10-acre plot of land that overlooked the Petra mountain range. Today, it is modelled on 19th century vernacular architecture of grand arches, vaults and local stone houses that move outward in a circular hut tilted fashion as if you are moving a down hill.

About 200 years ago people used to live in these old houses, but with the passage of time, they slowly abandoned the traditional

Taybet and moved higher up the mountain. Today's guest houses are situated in tiny alleyways and along footpaths that are rich with the smell of history.

Exploring the resort is an essential part of the excitement of visiting Taybet Zaman. One could spend considerable time investigating every nook and cranny before heading for the pool for a cool dip.

On a recent visit to Taybet Zaman and one early morning, I set out exploring the village, walking first in a circular fashion, then across and back again through a maze of alleyways. It's really a place where you would like to walk it over and over again, and wondering of how people must have lived back in a different age.

Visitors can never really get lost because all alleys somehow intersect leading to the same direction, and in different landmarks: hotel administration, restaurants, souk, cocktail bars, the museum and the Turkish bath in between traditional courtyards.

The resort is for people who want to relax and get away from the hurly-burly of life. It is a place where the pace of life is slower and more enjoyable; sipping cocktails while watching the sun go down, for instance.

The spacious guest rooms are old houses huddled next to each other. As you go into your room again it is like stepping into another era. Thick wooden doors lead you right into your room, all built and furnished in traditional manner: the bed, the wardrobe, the floorings, the walls, and the traditional settee.

Suddenly and sometime, maybe,

unpleasantly you are reminded of modern living: the telephone, television set, the refrigerator in your room, the so-called modern comforts of life.

But never mind that. A stroll around the village will take you into the souk. This is a tiny market that was especially created to add to the authentic touch. Here you have shops selling traditional handicrafts such as pottery, hand blown glass and traditional jewelry.

You can watch craftsmen perform their ancient art. In the souk, there is also Al Attar who sells exotic herbs, spices and incense, a photography shop and Al Dukkan, that offers gifts and souvenirs. The souk is not only a touristic attraction, but it is there also to help local craftsmen sell their products to visitors.

The Taybet Zaman has recently won this year's Tourism for Globalism Award for its stress on the preservation of cultural heritage and the environment. Termed as an environmentally-friendly property, Taybet Zaman recycles everything from the biological treatment of waste-water, recycled paper and through energy-saving techniques such as the low lighting systems,



Thus as you enjoy the friendly surroundings you can feel that you are doing your bit to save the environment. ■

Palestinians fighting battle for liberties

Continued from page 1

security forces have been brutal at times and 12 people have died in their custody, the Palestinian entity is not Syria or Iraq. Political opponents are not killed and independent media and civil rights groups are allowed to function—within limits.

Nonetheless, Palestinians say that, in the face of the collapsing Israeli-Palestinian peace process, Arafat has become increasingly intolerant of criticism and protective of his lock on power.

Activists who have run afoul of Arafat in recent months say he argues that the Palestinians must maintain a united front against the Israelis, and that internal politics must take a back seat to the Palestinians' struggle for a fully independent state.

Palestinian activists disagree. "There is no contradiction between the establishment of a Palestinian state and building democracy," said Shkierat. "We're fighting for a state and building democracy. Otherwise we're fighting for an empty state."

Members of the Palestinian legislature increasingly agree. Hatem Abdel Qader, a member of Arafat's Fatah faction, says he is frustrated with the Council's "ornamental" role, and

has called for early elections.

"The Council's role is to organize civil life, but we haven't achieved this nearly a year and a half after elections. We can't implement our programs for our constituents. I can't fulfill my election promises for justice, human rights, law and order and building a country of institutions. We can't do any of these things because of the Authority," Abdel Qader said.

"As a result, we must return to the people and tell them to choose their leaders again," he said.

While Abdel Qader's proposal is not expected to gather steam in the 88-member Council dominated by Arafat loyalists, his open dissent is significant. He is a respected leader who says that "the Council has lost its credibility with the people."

The Council has passed 167 resolutions and laws since its formation, almost all of which Arafat has ignored. The most important is the Basic Law—an interim constitution for the pseudo-state—which was approved by the Council in a first reading and sent to Arafat on Oct. 31.

The Council never heard back. Nor has Arafat signed the Civil Service Law or Palestinian Monetary Authority Law that the Council sent to him.

He did sign a law authorizing the election of municipal councils, which is to be held this summer, but failed to approve accompanying legislation determining the authority of local governments.

Ahmed Kurei, who was backed by Arafat and elected as speaker of the Council by the Fatah majority, could force the issue by bringing these laws for a second reading, but critics say he chooses not to. And most of the Council members do not protest.

But Council members are growing restive and have begun to criticize the Authority on other issues. Recently, members began to echo charges by average Palestinians of inefficiency and corruption in government ministries.

For months, Palestinians have been complaining that officials grant government contracts in exchange for an interest in private companies, and that government and security officials have formed business monopolies that are killing local competition.

The public clamor forced Arafat to order his auditor general to investigate public spending. The auditor, Jarar Kidweh, found that most ministries and official institutions had abused their authority and wasted or misused \$326 million of public money in the last year.

The corruption has been presented in the Palestinian media as something done behind Arafat's back—rather than as

something Arafat at least closed his eyes to, which is what average Palestinians suspect. They blame most of the corruption—and much of the undemocratic governing—on the coterie of PLO officials who returned with Arafat to the West Bank and Gaza Strip from exile in 1994.

But while Arafat and the Legislative Council are both addressing the issue of corruption, the Palestinian leader does not want the legislature doing so publicly. At least not on television.

That appears to be the reason for the arrest last week of Daoud Kuttub, a Palestinian-American journalist who had been trying to broadcast the Legislative Council meetings on independent Palestinian television. Kuttub was released by the Palestinian police on Tuesday, after being held in custody for a week. No charges against him were filed.

Kuttub began the live broadcasts on Al Quds Educational Television about two months ago. When the broadcasts suddenly were jammed, apparently by the official Palestinian Broadcasting Co., Kuttub began taping them and distributing videocassettes to independent stations.

He was detained by Ramallah police, who said the order had come from Arafat. Kuttub's arrest is only the latest example of widespread efforts to intimidate the Palestinian media into conforming with Authority dictates.

Many Palestinians want their state to be more democratic than those of their Arab neighbors. But things do not seem to be heading that way, at least not to Rana Bishara, leader of an independent network of nongovernmental organizations that is fighting to remain independent.

The Palestinian Authority, Bishara charges, has drafted a restrictive law that would force nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs, to be licensed by the government and in many cases would require funding to pass through ministries.

Anis Al Qaq, deputy planning minister in charge of NGOs, says the law was drafted in consultation with NGOs, and defends it as comparable to NGO laws in Western countries.

Bishara says the larger issue is that the Palestinian Authority views the medical, development, human rights and relief organizations as competition for international aid and popular support.

"The NGO sector is viewed either as people who want to get money and compete with the government, or as opposition political parties hiding behind organizations," Bishara said. "It's nonsense."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Dakamseh trial postponed till Monday



Mother and wife pray for Dakamseh

Continued from page 1

security officers, and members of the local and international press. No Israelis were present at the opening session.

The mother and wife of the accused pledged their support and continued to recite verses from the Holy Koran.

His mother asked him to "keep his head high" and assured him that God is with him.

Dakamseh lost his temper when references to his alleged sexual behavior were read out and cried: "It's a lie."

His mother, who called for a fair trial for her son in a press conference last month, refused last Tuesday to speak to any female journalist who is not wearing the proper Muslim attire.

Besides Al Najdawi, Dakamseh has a three-member defence team. These include Zahra Shabati, Tha'er Naj-

dawi and Rasha Ibrahim. But the defence team is slowly expanding. It now includes Hussein Mjali, President of the Arab Human Rights Organization Najib Rashdan and lawyers Hani Khasawneh and Riyad Nawaiseh.

Rashdan criticized the course of the trial and called for a close meeting with the accused to study his file to guarantee a just and fair trial.

Mjali also shared his view and called to postpone the trial.

The session was postponed till this coming Monday.

Speaking about the possibility of bringing 25 Israelis in addition to 13 Jordanians for testimony next Monday, Al-Najdawi later said that he would refuse to take part in such trial because of his political and national beliefs. ■

Government and JPA meet, but neither is in a mood for compromise

Continued from page 1

feel their turn could be next. Last Saturday, four presidents of professional associations and the president of the Jordanian Writers Association, Fakhri Qawar, resigned in protest over the new press law.

The rest promise to follow suit if the government does not withdraw the new law by 21 June. The four presidents are Mr. Sa'id Abu Mezzer of the Dental Association, Hussein Mjali of the Lawyers Association, Muhammad Al Sa'idin of the Geologists Association, and Laith Shihailat of the Engineers Association.

His Majesty the King has criticized the resignations of association presidents and called on all to concentrate on doing their jobs.

Opposition parties released a statement last week demanding that the government cancels the new press law. The 11-party opposition bloc, which includes Islamists, leftists and pan-Arabists linked the timing of enacting the new press law with the coming parliamentary elections to be held later in the year.

"As we are getting close to parliamentary elections, the release of this unjust casts doubts about the integrity of the election process and raises questions about the credibility of the government in this regard," the parties' statement said.

Meanwhile, a 23-deputy opposition bloc in the Lower House is collecting signatures to ask for the convening of an extraordinary session of parliament—a minimum of 41 signatures is required. According to Lower House sources opposition deputies are expected to resign if they fail to gain the minimum number of signatures needed to convene a House session.

Legal experts believe that the temporary law is unconstitutional, however others say since the law received the Royal stamp of approval, the only way to revoke it would be holding an extraordinary session of parliament. ■

Summit restores measure of civility

Continued from page 1

mise on a new neighborhood for 30,000 Jews that Netanyahu ordered built in East Jerusalem. Netanyahu is equally adamant, having turned aside Mubarak's pleas for a construction freeze.

Palestinians say Jerusalem's eastern portion, captured by Israel from Jordan in the 1967 Middle East war, as capital of their would-be independent state. Israel pledged in 1993 to negotiate that issue, but Netanyahu now insists that compromise on the holy city is out of the question.

Israeli-Palestinian talks collapsed in acrimony two months ago when Netanyahu broke ground on the first major Jewish building project in East Jerusalem in the six years since the two sides started their talks. The new neighborhood, which Israel calls Har Homa, will sit on a hill-top known in Arabic as Jahal Abu Gheneim.

"It is clear that there is no progress at all, no progress," Ahmed Abdel Rahman, director-general of Arafat's office, said in an interview Tuesday night.

"The progress will begin when there are no bulldozers on Jahal Abu Gheneim."

Netanyahu and Mubarak dodged questions on the substance of their talks at a news conference Tuesday afternoon. Netanyahu said they had made "a positive beginning," and Mubarak promised to try to arrange another meeting soon that would draw Arafat back into the talks.

Abdel Rahman and others said, however, that Arafat would not consider meeting Netanyahu unless assured of a halt in construction.

Israel, while rejecting any public hint of compromise on the new neighborhood, came prepared with quiet proposals to make it more palatable. Dami Naveh, Netanyahu's closest aide, brought map cases and a large envelope bearing the logo of Israel's Orlik observation satellite, and the two leaders held detailed discussions of Israeli building plans.

In public, Mubarak neither endorsed nor rejected a reported Israeli proposal to press on with the new Jewish neighborhood but to synchronize construction with a parallel neighborhood for East Jerusalem Arabs.

"We discussed all views," Mubarak said, "and still we need further discussions and further consultation and we intend to meet another time, maybe in the coming few weeks."

Asked whether Arafat might attend, Mubarak replied: "I cannot guarantee you 100 percent the next meeting will be all three of us. We are going to try hard."

Outside the summit, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa maintained his characteristic hard line, saying in an Arabic interview that "the Palestinians cannot accept the continuation of settlement activities, especially in Jerusalem."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

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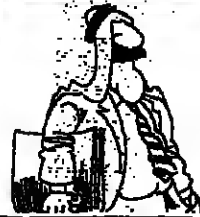
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LURIE'S WORLD



Our Say...

A glimmer of hope for peace

TWO HUMBLE, but important, developments relating to the struggling Middle East peace process took place this week that may yet revive hopes that the ailing process could somehow find itself on the road to recovery.

The beginning of the long-awaited delivery of about 30 million cubic meters of fresh water from Lake Tiberias into Jordan on Tuesday has focused attention on one of the fruits of regional peace in this water-hungry region. In spite of earlier problems caused by the Israeli side, and as a result of the intervention of His Majesty King Hussein, the Israeli side has finally relented and decided to honor its commitments under the bilateral peace treaty. The delivery of our share of water is a major development for Jordan, a country that today finds itself grappling with an acute water shortage crisis that cannot be solved unilaterally.

The second positive development is the one-day summit meeting between Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Sharm El Sheikh also on Tuesday. While little has filtered out of the meeting, it appears that the Israeli leader has understood the urgency of resuming negotiations with the Palestinian side. The meeting took place at a time when all US efforts to re-engage the negotiators had met with dismal failure. The main obstacle before reactivating the process remains Israel's decision to build a new settlement in occupied East Jerusalem—a decision that Israel continues to defend until now.

The Palestinians are determined to maintain their opposition to that move and boycott any further talks until Israel freezes all settlement building and expansion. Jordan and Egypt support the Palestinian stand and have also exerted pressure on Israel to amend its position. The United States, which has decided to suspend the mission of its special Middle Eastern envoy, Dennis Ross, to the region until the two parties settle their differences, is sending confusing signals to all parties.

This is the time for a focused Arab policy to make its presence felt. While an Arab summit does not appear to be in the offing, a meeting of Arab foreign ministers may be a good idea to give the Palestinian side a much needed boost. At the same time, the Arab side should consult with Jordan and Egypt, both of which have kept their lines of communications open with all sides.

The delivery of water to Jordan this week is an example of how peace in the region can transform the lives of its people to the better. It is also an example of how diplomacy and negotiations were able to pressure Israel into respecting its commitments.

Israel is committed to the Palestinian side as well under various pacts and agreements. Since the arrival of Mr Netanyahu to office the course that the process was leading had taken a different direction. That direction has led to a total collapse in negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians and put the entire process in jeopardy. The humble developments of this week may renew our hopes that all is not lost. But the ball remains in Israel's court. ■

Letters to the Editor

Rude and illogical

To The Editor

We are a travel corporate house providing hotel and car rental services to Jordanian trade offices and corporations. One of the destinations that we promote is Beirut.

A client asked me to help them out with their visa, so I went to the [Lebanese] Embassy on the 2nd Circle to obtain an application.

I was surprised when they refused to hand me an application, the reason being is that they only hand out applications between 8:00 am and 8:30 am although their official working hours are between 8:00 am and 10:00 am. For the record I arrived at the Embassy at 9:00 am.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my disappointment at the level of

people that they have meeting people and handing applications. They are very rude and refuse to speak in any logical manner.

The ironic thing about all this is the fact that Lebanon is in desperate need for tourism as well as business travel.

During March '97 Lebanon launched its first 'Shopping festival' to promote incoming travel, and they continue to strive on promoting tourism.

Yet they are constantly making it difficult for qualified business men and women to travel there.

Sincerely Yours,

Nassim Majdalawi
Travel Vendor Manager

Post Hebron realities

Peace process at lowest point in history

By Edward Said

WHEN I visited Hebron last July, I paid a call on an old friend, Mayor Mustafa Nasheh, to find out what he saw as the future of his town. He told me that he had pleaded with Yasser Arafat and his men during the 1995 negotiations that led up to Oslo "not to sign an agreement that would give a Palestinian seal of approval to the 450 illegal settlers—most of them fanatics squatting with such offensive, even murderous, insistence in the centre of an Arab town."

"It isn't just the principle of the thing that is so galling," he said, "but the fact that giving them this foothold in our midst by partitioning the town makes it possible for them to use Hebron as a precedent for staying in all their other settlements, extending their reach further all over the West Bank."

Nasheh's pleas went unheard, as Arafat and his team pressed ahead with their Israeli peace 'partners' who consolidated their gains with, I suspect, a sense of disbelief. How else could even the most hardened Israeli explain that the Palestinians had accepted a formula for 'coexistence' in Hebron which gave 450 people (with the Israeli army guarding them) the choicest 20 percent of the town's commercial centre, whereas the 160,000 resident Palestinians were expected to be happy that they got 80 percent, so bogged down with conditions as to make it a peripheral part of the Israeli enclave.

What sort of 'strategic' calculation by the Palestinian leadership produced acquiescence in the Israeli settler population being allowed to carry arms, abetted by Israeli patrols given virtually the run of the surrounding hills, while the Palestinian police were limited to a few poorly armed men, theoretically subject to Israeli restraint?

Nevertheless, there seemed to be genuine euphoria among Hebronites, for whom the presence of Israeli settlers and soldiers has been so unpleasant an ordeal: just seeing some of them leave in the hope of not having them come back on quite the same basis as before supplied a good day's worth of celebration.

But much of the jubilation will be as short-lived as it was when Ramallah and Nablus went through the same happy catharsis 18 months ago. Hebron was not liberated: 80 percent of it was given the right to administer municipal affairs—sanitation, health, postal delivery, education, local security and traffic—under the Palestinian Authority's jurisdiction, with Israel still in charge of security, access, water and overall sovereignty.

The ambiguities are evident in reports from Hebron in the press. On the first day, there were reports citing Netanyahu and Sharansky as to how Hebron is still Israeli, backed up by statistics showing continued Israeli control over the city. The next day, editors and stories predicted a Palestinian state emerging soon from the messy Palestinian 'archipelago' that has left the West Bank and Gaza divided into lots of little parts without territorial continuity or sovereignty.

On American TV, the *de rigueur* scene of Arafat and Netanyahu shaking hands with American mediator Dennis Ross between them showed a grim-faced Arafat anxious to speed away into the night. As the *New York Times* coyly put it in its jubilant report of how well things went, the actual amounts of land to be ceded to the Palestinians were left entirely to "Israel's discretion".

Now this is precisely how things were left in the Oslo II documents, since just before the Washington signing, the Israelis calmly removed the specific areas of re-deployment already agreed with the Palestinians and left the timetable. Apparently, Arafat demurred at this, but under American pressure was made to sign. His latest heroics during the Hebron negotiations were meant to make up for what had happened earlier: but he failed again. No wonder he didn't want to answer any questions.

It has been no secret that America, which has sub-contracted out its Middle Eastern policy to Dennis Ross and his coterie of experts, placed Arafat under pressure. Israel's political concerns and its exaggerated obsessions with security and terror were adopted by the American middlemen, who were acting as anything but honest brokers. There was also an important confluence of strategic aims that united Netanyahu and Ross: that there

should never be anything resembling real Palestinian self-determination.

And three-and-a-half years after Oslo began, 'autonomy' for Palestinians is all that has been achieved, in tiny enclaves on the West Bank whose roads and access are controlled by Israel. An important town like Ramallah now has settlements on three sides. Sovereignty in the true sense of the word remains in Israel's hands, and will remain so for the foreseeable future.

Why do so many Israelis seem upset by this agreement, which keeps them firmly in charge throughout the still-occupied Territories?

The reason is an ideological fanaticism so deep and all-encompassing that most western and even Arab readers do not have an adequate sense of its imperatives. Despite the millions of Palestinians in Palestine, they have always been considered aliens, to be tolerated at most or to be driven out or treated either as non-existent or as juridical inferiors.

Palestine is considered to be the land of the Jewish people entrusted to Israel; no non-Jews are doctrinally allowed to use or have this land. That is why Netanyahu, more honest than Peres, has always refused to accept the formula 'land for peace', and why sovereignty accorded to non-Jews has not, and will not be, an admissible concept in negotiations.

I believe these positions are also shared by the 'acceptable' Israelis whose views are aired in western media as representative of the peace camp, and who brilliantly conceal their real views of Palestinians beneath conscience-rending, anguished prose. They never bring up sovereignty for Palestinians. Many of them (including the egregious Henry Kissinger) speak of a Palestinian state, which they say they would accept, but none of them has



Edward Said

proceed with the Israelis like partners in crime; never mind that they get all the advantages, a lot of commercial deals have come our way.

There may be one or two more possibilities, but none explains the Palestinian streets' acceptance of this appalling situation, which seems to worsen daily. Many of Arafat's advisers are intelligent men and women, quite a few with long histories in progressive politics. Why are they so silent? And why do the most gifted so willingly accept a few material advantages (a car, an office, a VIP designation) in return for continuing to work with a man whose tactics they loathe and whose mistakes over the past few years they know—and say openly—has brought as Palestinians and as Arabs to one of the lowest points in our history?

Why silence, and why co-operation? Do they feel no obligation towards the truth and to the misery of a people whose continuing dispossession could have been alleviated a thousand times better than the PLO has done?

In the meantime, most people in America and in Europe genuinely believe that peace has improved things for the 'area', and that for the first time in 30 years the Palestinians are getting their freedom.

This is the cruelty of the Palestinian dilemma. We want to show that we desire peace, yet because of that 'peace', the daily lives of all but a tiny handful of wealthy businessmen, security chiefs and PA employees have become a good deal worse.

For at least six months, the mainstream media in the US and Europe have been filled with stories about the diplomatic front, the negotiations, the impasses and the final breakthroughs, and completely void of anything that shows real Palestinian lives on the ground.

There has been no coverage of the thousands of students in Gaza who cannot go back to their schools and universities on the West Bank (forbidden by Israel); nothing about the large number of Palestinians prisoners still festering (and in some cases being tortured to death) in Israeli prisons; nothing about the horrors that a large family in Gaza with unemployed father must go through to survive; nothing about the systematic, almost daily reprisals against Palestinians who try to prevent their own dispossession by Israeli settlers and army; nothing about what it means for a Palestinian to try to get in and out of Gaza (or about all West Bankers who have been forbidden entry into Jerusalem for a year); nothing about the checkpoints that make the line West Bank enclaves seem like stifling ghettos; nothing about life under Crut's dreadful regime, with books, newspapers and magazines censored or banned, the security services threatening average people, and corruption killing the possibility of regular daily business.

And nothing, above all, about the total absence of law or the rule of law in the Palestinian autonomy areas.

Given all this, plus the sense of frustration and hopelessness felt by every Palestinian at the cruel farce our leaders are forced to enact, it becomes an absolute duty to describe the actualities of quotidian life under the peace process—unadorned and in the greatest detail possible.

The world must be told by us what our people under occupation are still going through. This is not a matter of money, but of discipline and will. If every one of us first took it upon him or herself to be informed, and then attempted somehow to break through the official and media silence—with a letter to the editor, a call to a radio or TV station, the setting-up of groups to do this kind of work systematically and collectively—then we will be beginning our attempt at liberation, a laughably modest attempt it is true, but surely a great deal better than passivity and silence.

The present situation cannot last. There are too many inequities and injustices right at the heart of Palestinian life. Who is preparing for the next, post-Hebron phase? ■

Middle East Beat

by Khairi Janbel

Winds of fear

IT IS easy in our region to resort to machismo when resolving disputes. The first thing that comes to mind is to eliminate by force, as if the dialogue of weapons is the only language we understand.

We don't intend to go through such disgraceful episodes. Suffice it to say that the recent Turkish incursion into Iraq illustrates what we are talking about. Turkey has the right to defend itself, but does not have the right to threaten.

If there was more regional cooperation, and consultation, then the need for warfare could be eliminated. We previously discussed the idea of regionalism and regional identity. The fact remains mutual self-interest, and common objectives must be heightened to levels that force understanding among regional neighbors.

The latest sore spots, as well as endemic ones, in the area show that there is no alternative to dialogue that include all parties, aggrieved or otherwise, to find common understanding, and eliminate the use of arms to resolve disputes.

The pre-requisites for such a clearly there: The water issue, refugees, territorial disputes, terrorism, energy resources and poverty—commonalities that links us. Do we break out individually, by contributing more to death and destruction, or do we sit together, to solve problems and find permanent solutions for the 21st century.

Let us not get stuck in pedantic definitions, but use common sense and geography to save ourselves plenty of energy and thought. The collective concerns are there, and the disputes and issues are too obvious to be ignored.

Our approach cannot be but inclusive, meaning, that Turkey, Iran, and Israel are major disputants in our region.

The fact that there are many disputes between us is more than enough to get us together to resolve them. Logic, and rationality must prevail, for us, and among us, so that we can escape the circle of insecurity, and turmoil.

To exact support from the international community to proposals made "by moderates" is an important factor that contributes to stability and creates confidence and understanding. It is the right of moderates to expect such a support.

Solving the problems of our region can't come from the outside; they must come from within the region. However, international support to the moderate regimes of the area is important nevertheless.

What would be the alternative to regional conference, regionalism, or regional working committees? We have the Israelis wanting to build settlements and talk peace, the Turks talking trade and sending troops into Iraq, the Iranians wanting to reach a *modus vivendi* with their neighbors without relinquishing occupied territories, and the Arab world embroiled with rivalry.

The regional theater of the absurd has become the outcome of the constant policies of drift and want. The economies of despair are leading us to the politics of despair, meaning literally, each for his own, setting the scene for a future in the region. Some have attempted to bring reason to the region by evolving a policy of new axis of alliances. This dangerous policy is likely to divide the region even more into antagonistic blocs.

Turkey looks towards Israel, Syria towards Greece, and North Africa across the Mediterranean, while the Gulf has a trans-Atlantic System security. Are we supposed to run in order to catch the end tail of one alliance or the other?

It is the faulty vision of not seeing ourselves as one complimentary area that is dividing us into more clusters. The term regional outlook, with all its ills, could have provided most if not all to our collective grievances. ■

It has been no secret that America, which has sub-contracted out its Middle Eastern policy to Dennis Ross and his coterie of experts, placed Arafat under pressure

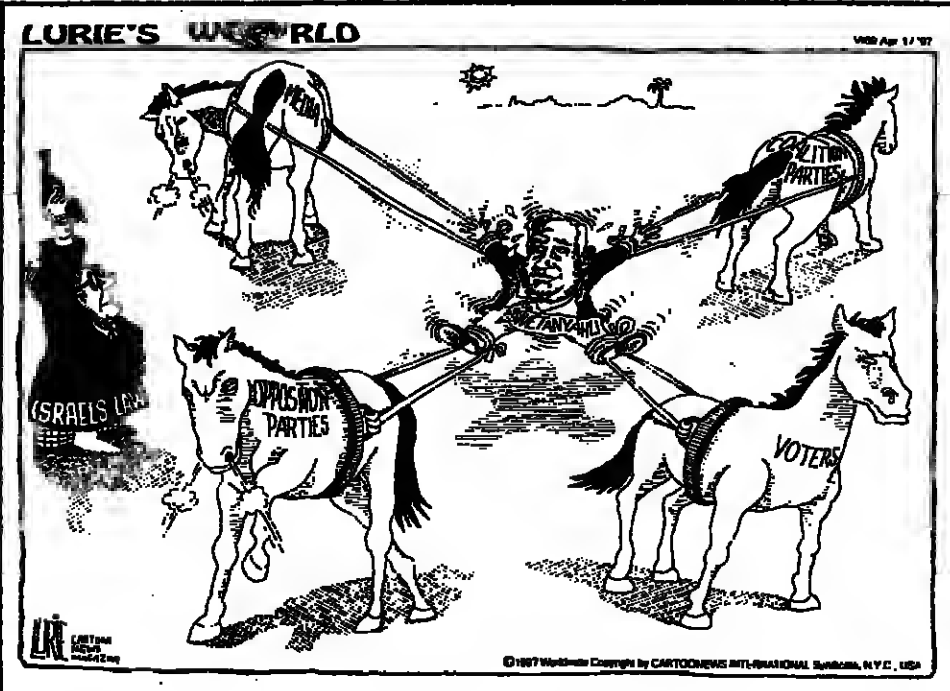
specified sovereignty and real self-determination for Palestinians.

Trying to put myself in the shoes of the PLO men who continue to produce such disadvantageous agreements that do nothing to change the course of Israeli policy, I keep asking what our leaders must be thinking. They certainly do not do very much talking, and share very little with their people beyond the usual triumphalist nonsense.

All I come up with is a series of unflattering rationales for going on as before, with equally bad results and equally tragic consequences for the whole people. One is that as long as the peace process guarantees the centrality of the PLO and its leader, then anything goes. Another is that being so out-gunned and out-smarted by Israel, you feel you have no choice but to go on, trying to brazen it out vis-a-vis your own people with hopeful but ultimately misleading speeches and promises; meanwhile, you surround yourself with supporters who tell you what you want to hear, and are anxious to help you set up feel-good things like a bag-pipe band, a few luxurious cars and houses, and postage stamps with your face on them. The best thing is to go on as many state visits (none of them necessary) as possible, one day Stockholm, another Paris, another Cairo.

A third rationale is to make more concessions, accepting all the humiliating Israeli concessions in the wishful fantasy that some day you'll either stop having to make concessions or the Israelis will give you a few things back.

Fourthly, you can say that this is politics, a dirty business, and so we



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Business scene

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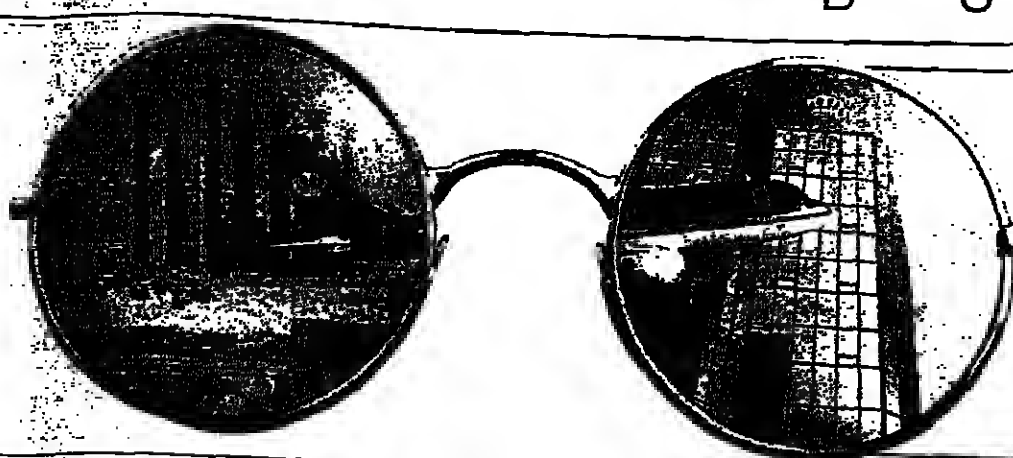
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ROYAL JORDANIAN **Reflecting the Change.**

Business scene

The balance sheet of authorized banks in 1996 showed a noticeable decline. Assets in 1996 were 5% compared with 12% in 1995. Deposits increased by only 3.9% compared with 7.8% in 1995. According to the annual report of the Banks' Association, direct facilities increased by 6% in 1996 against 14.7% the previous year.

The report added that banks made 10 loans amounting to JD 53.4 million in 1996 compared with 12 loans worth JD 96 million in 1995. The banks share of these was 89.5%, while the remainder (10.5%) by the Social Security Corp. Four of these loans were made in US dollars, worth \$39.5 million. The lions share went to the Arab Bank which participated in seven loans at JD 8.8 million (16.5% of the total).

The number of tourists who visited Jordan during the first quarter of this year shows a drop of 11% compared with the same time in 1996.

According to latest statistics, there was a decline in American and European tourists who visited Jordan in the first quarter of this year, at 12% and 10% respectively.

However, statistics pointed to a noticeable rise in Arab tourists of 10%. The total of tourists from the Gulf was 134,421. Also, the number of Israeli visitors was 44,077, showing an increase of 9%.

The Standards and Specifications Corp., in the last two months inspected 90 factories. About 13 factories were issued warnings and two closed because of standard violations. Similarly 13 out of 61 chemical factories were issued warnings and three closed. Also seven electrical out of 22 were warned.

Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 27 May

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US\$	0.7080	0.7100
E	1.1510	1.1568
DEM	0.4124	0.4145
SFR	0.4801	0.4825
FRF	0.1227	0.1233
YEN (100)	0.5624	0.5652
DEL	0.3667	0.3685
LIT (100)	0.0419	0.0421

Jordanian-European agreement continues to raise concern among industrial sector

THE INITIAL signing of the Jordanian-European Association Agreement in Malta last month has created a state of caution to say the least, among Jordanian industrial producers.

Manufacturers, fearing that they may get lost in a sea of advanced European technology, are still wondering about their future. Questions about the consequences of lifting customs duties on local industry is much in circulation.

Will they, for instance, be strong enough to face the competition from East Asia?

Will Jordanian industry be strong enough to rehabilitate itself within the 12-year "grace period," that has been agreed upon?

The government deals with the association agreement as an "inevitable reality" that should be implemented sooner or later, while economists and producers argue that it will bring more heated competition from European products.

The initial signing of the agreement is seen as putting our present industries in jeopardy," Dr Munir Hamarneh, a prominent economic analyst said.

It also blocks the way in front of new local industries in Jordan, added Dr Hamarneh.

The negotiators, who concluded the association agreement after intensive talks, would have to bear in mind the real situation of the country; a small state that lacks advanced scientific, technological and industrial development. With such situation, this country will face a highly developed European continent that has high quality advanced technology.

Dr Hamarneh stressed that many studies for instance, pointed at the great technological difference between Egypt and Europe. In the 1950s, Egypt only lagged 10 years.

today, it is 50 years behind Europe.

Jordanian industries are expected to face heated competition from similar products coming from Europe, particularly if we consider the wide gap between our products and European ones, he said.

The problem is that will our national industry prove itself and stand on a firm base to face outside challenges as we are moving towards the 21st century.

Is our industry able to match with European products and technology, or will it have the opportunity to follow an advanced economic bloc in the near future?

Some experts earlier called for a sufficient period to give Jordanian industries time to prepare themselves for the future challenges.

But there are other factors that also have their influence on our local industries. This includes trade exchange with EU members.

A study prepared by Dr Ibrahim Badran on the Jordanian-European partnership and the mechanism of adaptation, revealed that Euro-Med trade varies from one country to the other.

The volume of Jordan trade with EU for instance is not that much, as the size of Jordanian exports to the EU continued to fall since the 1980s.

What is demanded is that Jordan should embark on measures that would give it a strong position to attract the interest of the European investors, importer or partner, Dr Zaki Al Ayoubi, a member in Amman Chamber of Industry said. He added that there are 21,000 industrial establishments in Jordan, 95 percent of these are small scale. What is also needed is the ability to have a technological and financial edge to enhance performance and the competitive

potential.

This can be done through intensive programs to restructure such firms, and encourage them to merge into bigger productive units that are strong enough to face competition.

There is also another challenge—the customs fees imposed on industrial inputs. The Amman Chamber of Industry has long called for the exemption of these inputs from customs fees.

This contradicts the followed measures to exempt cargos entering Jordan from customs charges. This is one of the reasons for the higher costs of locally produced cargo compared with the imported ones.

Al Ayoubi said that "we have agreed with the government to cut the ceiling of such protection and not cancel it."

However, he is optimistic saying that the partnership agreement prepares Jordanian industry to meet the conditions of membership in the World



Trade Organization (WTO) and opens new markets for our products.

Moreover, he said free trade with Europe will provide incentive for regional trade exchange and will force us to reinforce our productivity and quality. Also, the consumer will be the most beneficiary as liberalizing trade will give him more options and prices, something that would not exist under a monopoly situation.

But, Dr Yusef Mansour, an expert in the Ministry of Planning is enthusiastic for the partnership agreement and confirmed that it will be positively reflected on national industry, and improve its production.

Dr Mansour throws the ball into the corner of the Jordanian industry. He stressed that it is time for these industries to improve themselves and properly utilize such opportunity which prepares them to enter worldwide markets.

Registered companies in industrial sector record sharp hike in April

THE VOLUME of non-Jordanian investment in companies shot up last April. This is seen as the result of the government policy of encouraging investment in the country. Non-Jordanian investors

appear to be more interested in the Jordanian market largely because of its great potential.

A total of 52 non-Jordanian investors were attracted to this country in April.

Last month, 369 companies were registered at a capital of JD 12 million, but only JD 263,000 came from non-Jordanian investments.

According to statistics released by the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the operating companies in Jordan totalled 46078 until the end of last month. These had a capital of JD 3,773 billion.

The capital of commercial sector companies reached JD785,286. This figure was divided among 26,194 companies.

Capital in the agricultural sector stood at JD 17,451 and distributed among 116 companies. As for the contracting sector, the capital was JD 132,298 at 1788 companies.

The services sector has JD 1,585,515, including 11,996 companies with limited liabilities have a capital of JD 1,007,106 including 4306 companies. Capital of public shareholding companies was JD 2,119,422 distributed among 233 companies.

The number of registered companies last April increased compared to 361 companies at a capital of JD 35,383 million

Business Chronicle

United Arab stance needed before the next economic summit

THE DISPUTE over the inevitable relation between politics and economics arises between now and then, but particularly before holding economic summits. While it is out of the question that the two go hand in hand, they can never be separated from each other. Some argue however, that politics should be put aside, and there should be a greater concentration on our economy and ways of improving it.

To a large extent, this dispute shows how narrow-minded people can be. Since the signing of the peace treaties, our officials have spared no time in calling for the establishment of positive times with Israel. This is despite the fact that Israel has also wasted no time in flexing its muscles.

But nevertheless, Arabs are today asked or even forced to make further concessions to satisfy what can only be termed as Israeli arrogance.

The former three economic MENA summits (Casablanca 1994, Amman 1995 and Cairo 1996) have failed to minimize Israeli influence in the region. On the contrary, these have proved as a gateway for Israel to penetrate Arab markets.

Israel proved to be the main beneficiary as evidenced by Arab divisions. Our governments, displaying goodwill after the peace treaties, rushed to normalize economic ties with Israel through the exchange of commercial delegations, trade contracts and the opening of commercial offices.

But with the fading optimism of a brighter future, Arabs soon realized that Israeli promises to rebuild new ties with them were mere dreams.

This was reinforced by the arrival of Likud and Benjamin Netanyahu on the Israeli political scene. Today, his hardline approach is not only undermining the peace process, but the stability and security of the area.

The first Arab reaction to such a policy materialized during the last economic summit held in Cairo. Participating delegations did their best to "isolate" Israel.

Talk is being intensified these days, especially by Syria, to postpone the next MENA Summit which is due to be held in Qatar next November.

Despite the insistence of the Doha government to hold the summit in time, some GCC members are also joining the diplomatic efforts. They want an assurance that Qatar will not host the summit unless Israel stops the building of settlements and withdraws from the Golan Heights.

Recently, the Arab League voted to stop normalization with Israel. GCC states also called for a freeze on ties with Israel, unless the latter meets its commitments towards the peace process.

Moreover, the Syrians would be doubly upset if Qatar decides to go ahead with its plans and sends an invitation to Israel to attend.

Generally speaking, Syria is presently leading a positive role in the region, no matter what are its objectives, as this serves our main target—to create a unified Arab stance that restores Arab solidarity and cooperation.

There are positive signals that such unity can be materialized, especially since Israeli practices now are threatening Jerusalem, GCC, Egypt and Syria will meet in Damascus next month again to try and reach an agreement.

Individual rating upgraded for Kuwait's Gulf Bank

IBCA, the European credit rating agency, has raised Gulf Bank's individual rating from B.C. to B. Its long-term, short-term and legal ratings are unchanged at BBB+ A2 and 2 respectively.

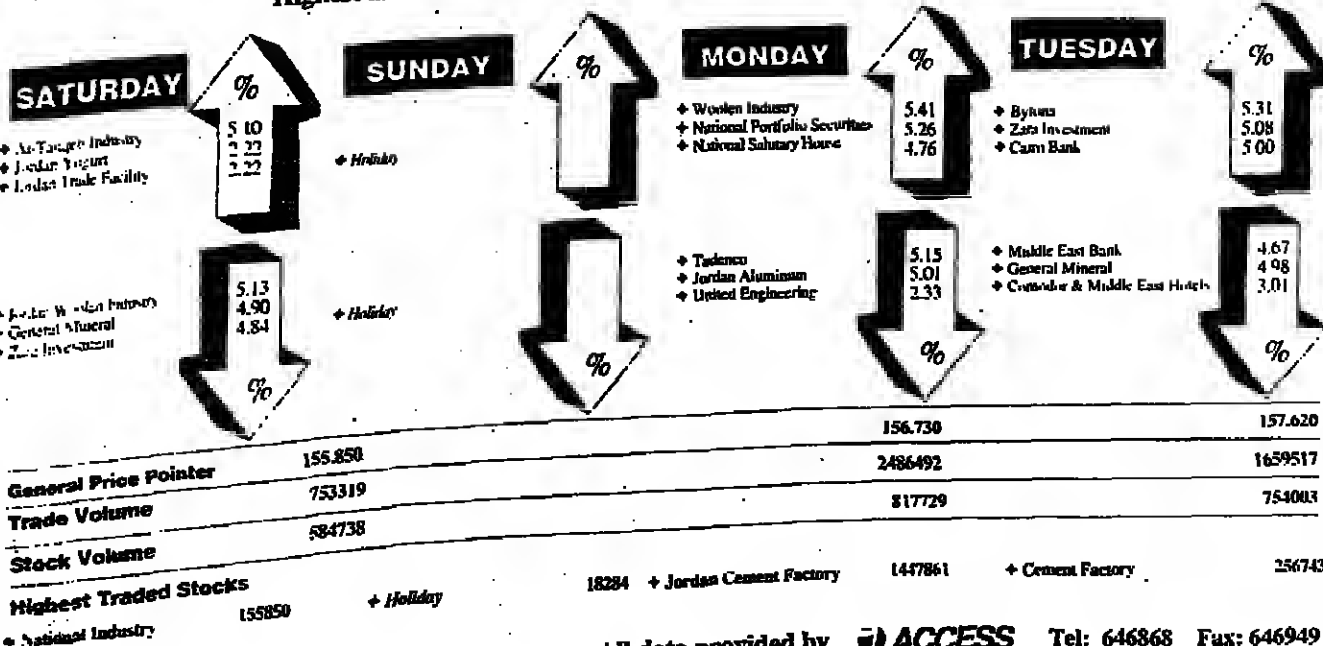
Gulf Bank, the second largest bank in Kuwait, reported another year of very good profits in 1996, stemming from its focus on product innovation and service quality, a low cost base and its successful efforts in recent years to reduce its cost of funds. The latter, derived from market recognition of the bank's strong financial condition, has enabled it to earn a larger spread on its Government Debt Bond (GDB) portfolio than the majority of its competitors.

Gradual repayment of GDB's have reduced the portfolio to a level where it is no longer considered to have significant adverse implications in relation to the bank's risk profile or performance. Asset quality remains good; the bank is well reserved and is one of the few Kuwaiti banks which has already complied with the central bank's strict new provisioning requirements. The bank has a cautious approach to market risk and remains strongly capitalized.

MARKET WATCH

24-27 May

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market



LURIE'S WORLD

V770 Apr 10 97



Landslide election upset shows regime out of touch

By Nicholas Goldberg

TEHRAN, Iran—Whatever it may ultimately mean for the future of Iran, Mohammad Khatami's stunning landslide in the presidential election last Friday proves one thing: that the leadership of this Islamic republic is badly out of touch with its people.

The regime expected a turnout of about 60 percent, but instead, got 90 percent. Until the final day, top officials predicted a victory by the establishment candidate, the apparent preference of the country's Supreme Leader and its conservative parliament. Instead, 21 million out of 29 million voters backed Khatami, a self-styled reformer who campaigned on a platform of increased openness and freedom.

"This was a very heavy defeat for the establishment—and a great surprise," said Ahmad Borghani, an Iranian journalist. "From now on, the government is going to have to be more accountable for what it does."

By most accounts, the vote was not a sign of irreversible dissatisfaction with the regime. Revolution was already tried 18 years ago and few Iranians are ready to try it again. Rather, Friday's vote appears to have been a call for moderation and change; for an end to rampant inflation and for a more relaxed, more pluralistic society, where satellite dishes are legalized, books and newspapers can be published freely and where government keeps its restrictive rules and regulations out of people's private lives.

The question now is how the regime will respond. Unlike in most Western democracies, an electoral mandate, even a massive one, is not something that necessarily has to be heeded in Iran. Supreme Leader Ali Khatami, who will remain a more powerful figure here than Khatami, and the conservative, hard-line parliament can either try to interpret the message and respond to the concerns evidenced in the voting—or they can clamp down, close newspapers, silence opponents and ensure that only those deemed sufficiently loyal to the regime are allowed to wield power. The regime can view the vote as an opportunity to change, perhaps the first such opportunity since the end of the Iran-Iraq war in 1988, or as an opportunity to hold firm with its repressive policies.

In a positive sign, the power elite in Iran, including Khatami and the conservative mullahs who hold sway, allowed the 54-year-old Khatami to run, to campaign and ultimately, to win and seem prepared to let him take office. But how much power they will give him is in question.

Sunday, much of the day was spent on spin control, trying to convince the world that the election was not a powerful blow to the principle of Islamic rule. An editorial in the English-language Tehran Times, for instance, called the enormous, unprecedented turnout for Khatami "another vote of confidence to the Islamic system and its leadership."

And during a broad-ranging two-hour news conference, outgoing President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani tried to play down the differences between Khatami and the Islamic leaders who are already in power, arguing that the Iranian people were satisfied with Islamic rule.

"Some reporters seem to think that the election represented a protest against the government," he said. "But that is not our interpretation... If you study the comments by the candidates, you'll see that the major emphasis was on respect for the principles that are already followed by the government."

But when pressed, Rafsanjani acknowledged that the turnout had been surprisingly large, and that Khatami's opponent had been the preferred candidate of most of the country's leaders. What's more, Rafsanjani hinted repeatedly that the message of the voters had been clearly received in the corridors of power.

"I believe that the vote of the people is very important and that all officials will pay attention to the wishes of the people, within the framework of the constitution and Islamic principles," he said carefully. "You know that in Iran, the leader and all of us pay attention to the presence of the people, and to the turnout. We began our revolution with the people."

At the very least, the election appears to mark Iran's continuing, if incremental, move down the evolutionary road toward greater openness and perhaps even pluralism. Conditions are still repressive, particularly for people who dare to oppose the regime. But leaders such as Rafsanjani are beginning to talk about the formation of political parties. Some have talked about cutting back restrictions on people's lifestyles that may have been "excessive," as Rafsanjani put it. All within the context, of course, of political Islam as handed down by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

And Khatami affirmed that he's comfortable in that context. In a message read on state radio and television, he called for "different forces, views, thoughts and skills" to participate to make a "greater, versatile and proud Iran."

But he stressed the "need to reinforce Islamic foundations and values as well as the morals of Mohammad" and called on Iranians to "unanimously resist threats from abroad and vigilantly defend national independence and sovereignty in all domains."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



Khatami: The victory sign.

Rafsanjani says Iran will heed voters' message

By John Daniszewski



TEHRAN, Iran—Responding to the landslide victory of a moderate cleric to succeed him, Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani said last Sunday that the vote was a message to the country's leadership that would not be ignored.

Rafsanjani said the overwhelming vote for former Culture Minister Mohammad Khatami showed the emergence of a "new idea" that must receive due attention from the rest of the government.

"All of the officials of the country are going to pay attention to this—within the framework of Islamic laws and the constitution," Rafsanjani pledged.

But he denied interpretations that the vote was a protest against the hard-line Islamic government, saying that all of the candidates' campaigns had emphasized "maintenance of the framework and principles of the system."

Khatami, who surged to victory on a program promising greater freedoms and tolerance of different views, denounced his conservative opponent, Parliament Speaker Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, the favorite of the country's religious establishment and much of the state's administrative apparatus.

In a statement quoted on Iranian television Sunday, Khatami said of his victory, "Iran has successfully passed another test and a new era has begun in the shining history of the Islamic Republic."

"All forces, all thoughts, opinions and skills" are now needed to move forward, Khatami said in the statement, which was monitored by the British Broadcasting Corp.

In what could be a signal of an era of reforms to come, the still-powerful Rafsanjani promised that he will work to help Khatami carry out his program and will support any plans by the new president to allow women to serve as Cabinet ministers or in other high positions in the next government.

Rafsanjani also expressed hope that this year's presidential race will lead to the development of political parties, which he called "a requirement for good governance."

Draping himself comfortably in a throne-like chair and smiling during much of a two-hour news conference, the white-turbaned Rafsanjani appeared unperturbed and unsurprised by the results. "It seems that since Mr. Khatami has presented a better program for the future, he has drawn most of the votes," he said.

He pointed out that Khatami had done a much

better job of reaching out to young voters. In Iran, 75 percent of the 61.3 million people are under 25.

When a reporter suggested that voters appeared to want to lift Islamic strictures on personal conduct, such as the rule that women must be covered in public and the ban on social relationships between unmarried people of the opposite sex, Rafsanjani said he believes that most Iranians would oppose such "vicious demands."

Nevertheless, he hinted that there might be a possibility of relaxation by the next government. "Maybe some of the restrictions have been excessive," he said. "All of these restrictions may not be desirable."

Alluding to a conservative bloc in parliament that had thwarted some of his own reform plans, Rafsanjani said he hopes that "petty factional problems will not have any negative impact" on the next government.

There were already signs of rapid adjustment to the new political realities caused by Khatami's overwhelming victory. The parliament, where about 200 out of 270 deputies had backed Nateq-Nuri, on Sunday passed a resolution of full cooperation with Khatami.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Development sowing scene of discontent

By Rebecca Tronson

MAALE ADUMIM, Occupied West Bank—On a vast expanse of open land in the rocky hills west of this booming Israeli settlement, the next explosive housing controversy may be taking shape.

To Benny Kashriel, the mayor of Maale Adumim, the plans for a new neighborhood on the city's outskirts will allow it to attract thousands of residents and Jerusalem-area visitors with hotels, shops and new homes.

"It's a question of business," Kashriel said of the proposal for 1,500 apartments and 3,000 hotel rooms. "It's not ideological at all."

But to Palestinians, Israeli liberals and Western diplomats, the 3,000-acre site, strategically located between Maale Adumim and Jerusalem, is a significant new danger to Middle East peacekeeping, already dented by Palestinian anger over Israel's decision in March to build a Jewish neighborhood inside traditionally Arab east Jerusalem. That construction, on a disputed hilltop called Har Homa in Hebrew and Jabal al Ghincim in Arabic, set off Pal-

estinian riots and a deadly suicide bombing at a Tel Aviv cafe.

The project for Maale Adumim—the West Bank's largest settlement—appears poised to become the next scene of confrontation in a rapidly intensifying struggle over the West Bank lands Israel captured in 1967.

Israel characterized the Har Homa decision as a step toward alleviating a severe housing shortage in Jerusalem. Palestinians decried it as part of an Israeli plan to surround east Jerusalem with Jewish neighborhoods, choking it off from the West Bank and keeping it from ever becoming the capital of an independent Palestinian state.

The Maale Adumim proposal is at least as controversial—partly because of a new US government study that questions the need for more housing in the area.

The proposal, which supporters and opponents alike say is headed for government approval, comes amidst a forceful new push by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to expand Jewish settlements on the West Bank, fulfilling campaign promises to cement Israel's hold over the occupied territory. The Israeli peace group Peace Now, which monitors settlement activity, says Netanyahu's administration is approving new construction at a rate nearly twice as fast as the previous governments.

This week, Netanyahu dug in further, rejecting the US survey and vowing to provide settlers with additional construction and funding.

The survey, disclosed by the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* and confirmed by US officials, found that 26 percent of the homes in West Bank settlements and 56 percent of those in the Gaza Strip are empty.

Netanyahu immediately denounced the statistics as "false by an order of magnitude," to put it mildly. The prime minister said he had no exact figures for the number of empty homes in West Bank settlements but said it is far less than 25 percent of all dwellings there.

"This is a groundless assertion," Netanyahu declared during a tour this week of Jordan Valley communities. "I can assure you that this is not the situation."

On Wednesday, leaders of the 145,000 settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip said there



are almost no vacancies in settlements near Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, and far fewer than reported even in the more remote communities. But they said they could give no overall percentages.

Peace Now also described the American figures as inflated. The group, which views settlements as an obstacle to peace, uses Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics figures showing the overall vacancy rate for the West Bank and Gaza Strip at about 12 percent. However, those numbers, the most recent available from the government, are from 1995.

There is little doubt that the settlement issue is back on center stage. American diplomats, who monitor settlement growth with site visits and, reportedly, with satellite photography, say Netanyahu's insistence on expansion is complicating US efforts to forge a territorial compromise between Israel and the Palestinians.

Settler leaders said the leak of the survey, in the midst of the crisis in the peace talks, appeared aimed at pressuring Netanyahu to freeze construction in the lands they in the West Bank.

"It's the first time I feel a psychological war against us by the United States," said Pinhas Wallerstein, chairman of the Council of Jewish Communities of Judea, Samaria and Gaza. "I don't want to say this is a lie but it's a huge mistake." There are more than 140 settlements in the West Bank and

Gaza, with a population of about 145,000. Many residents live in the communities for religious or ideological reasons, but others say their reasons are economic: Housing there tends to be cheaper than in Israel's larger cities.

Palestinians view settlements as an attempt by Israel to establish "facts on the ground" that will pre-empt the final peace arrangement between the two sides. The Maale Adumim project would all but sever the link between Palestinian communities of the northern West Bank and Abu Dis, a village near Jerusalem often mentioned by Palestinian moderates as a possible compromise capital for their hoped-for state.

"With this, Israel can close off any hope we have about Jerusalem," said Khalil Tufajli, the Palestinians' chief negotiator. "Here, they can destroy the future of Palestine."

Netanyahu says the interim accords his predecessors signed with the Palestinians do not explicitly prohibit Israel from building in settlements, and he argues that the housing is desperately needed.

Since Netanyahu took office last June, his government has given final approval to construction of about 2,400 apartments in four communities, according to Peace Now director Mossi Raz. Plans for another 2,900 units are awaiting authorization by the West Bank's civil administration before being sent to Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai,

who is empowered to give the final approval.

Several thousand more apartments are in earlier stages of regional and municipal approval, according to several sources.

In addition, Netanyahu's government, unlike Labor, has embraced settlement growth in every part of the West Bank, not only in communities near Jerusalem or the 1967 Green Line. For example, Raz noted, the tiny northern settlement of Ganim, near the Palestinian-controlled city of Jenin, was given approval in March to build 310 apartments, tripling its size.

Even more significant, he said, is a nearly palpable shift in the attitude of the Israeli public in recent months, becoming gradually more accepting of settlement growth.

The spokeswoman for Wallerstein's settlement umbrella organization, who has faulted Netanyahu since his election for not doing enough for settlers, was relatively positive in her comments.

"Before, I would have given him a D-," said the spokeswoman, Aliza Herbst, of the prime minister's settlement policy. "Now, it's probably a C+." He's better than the average government, but he hasn't lived up to his promises to allow us to expand beyond natural growth."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



Prime Minister Hariri defends Lebanese government live on Orbit's Ala Al Hawa

IN A special interview with Emad Eldin Adeb, Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri defended the Lebanese government's current position regarding the political, economic and social situation in the country. The episode was the last in a special edition series of *Ala Al Hawa* broadcast live from Beirut. The interview with Hariri follows that of Hassan Nasrallah, Secretary General of Hizbollah, who appeared on *Ala Al Hawa* 23 May. Prime Minister Hariri has, in the past, called on Hizbollah to cease fighting with Israeli forces.

The Prime Minister addressed in depth complaints that the current government is establishing its own priorities against those of its citizens, an opinion expressed by the opposition. Rebuilding the country, both economically and socially, according to Hariri, requires an investment in infrastructure, a fight against illegal business and above all, a strategy to job creation. Hariri also noted the government is currently improving schools, hospi-



tals and other social projects — and will continue to do so. When confronted by host Adeb regarding the current Syrian presence

in Lebanon, Hariri described it as "necessary," stating that their presence was needed to stand against repeated Israeli attacks, adding that instability in Lebanon affects the stability in Syria.

Hariri took this opportunity to introduce a proposal for a new electoral system for Lebanon's future. The Prime Minister stressed this new system would involve deputies representing all Lebanese people — not limited to one sect.

Ala Al Hawa, Orbit's exclusive innovative live nightly talks, show, is broadcast on *Al Thania*, the network's premium Arabic language channel, from Saturday to Wednesday at 6:30 pm GMT, and is currently sponsored by Al-Jazira Vehicles Agencies Co./Ford. Viewers throughout the Arab world can participate directly in the live broadcast, calling or faxing in with their questions. The special edition from Beirut has also been available on Lebanon's Future Television.

فكرنا من اننا

A travelogue

A personal view of Brunei

By Ibrahim Khalil
Special to The Star

IT IS where modernity and tradition come together, where high-powered contemporary society stands alongside the more sedate, beautiful and the natural.

For the inquisitive visitor, Brunei would be an island of dreams, a chance to experience a different pace of life that is characterized by the intermingling of races, cultures and traditions. The country is predominantly of the Malay race, yet it has a large Chinese community. The language of the state is Malay and the official religion is Islam but people of other religions may practice freely.

This is also why Brunei is referred to as Darussalam, the "Abode of Peace."

In the middle of the South China Sea, Brunei, whose population numbers no more than 300,000, is located in the north-west corner of Borneo and has a land border with the Malaysian state of Sarawak.

This tiny country of 5,765 square kilometers is well endowed with oil-rich deposits and is today the cornerstone for the country's rapid development.

Within decades, Brunei's skyline was transformed into a kaleidoscope of architectural edifices. But Islamic design and tradition predominated as evidenced in the futuristic slab modern structures and the traditional concrete settings of central

courtyards and fountains.

The picturesque setting is due to the guiding hand of its ruler, Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah. He has always insisted that the Muslim character of the state, which took a foothold in Brunei as early as 1371, should always be reflected in its institutions and its styles of buildings.

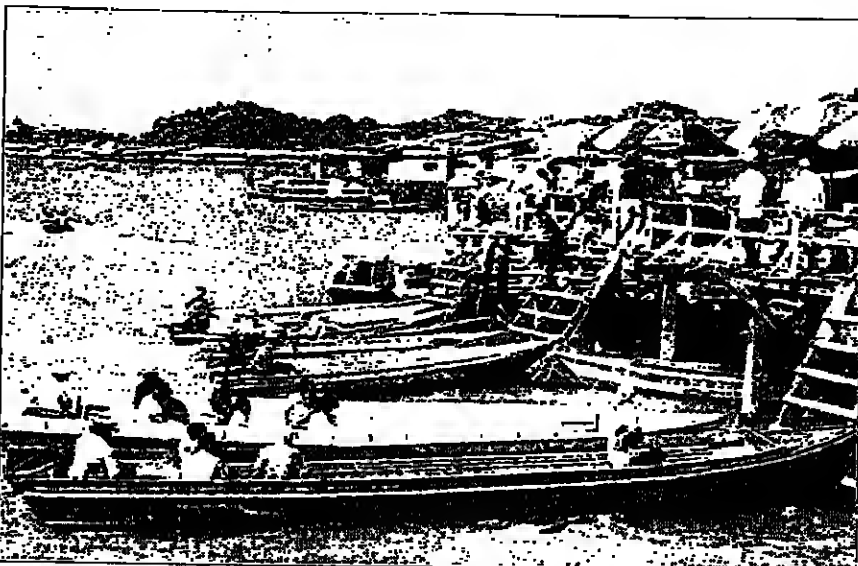
They in turn have also been designed to suit Brunei's somewhat harsh climate. Hot, humid and wet all year round, the Brunei design as it were, has been developed to include special insulation, and shading devices that are coupled with reflective paving and glass; a development to provide extra comfort to locals and visitors.

What is interesting also is the water garden incorporated in the traditional settings, a concept that dates back to medieval Islam.

These aspects combined with the relative smallness of Brunei makes it a haven for tourists. Indeed, they can see the wonders of Darussalam in a relatively short space of time.

It would also be fair to say that visitors taking Brunei as their holiday destination would be looking for the exotic, for a civilization that combines centuries of development and preservation as it has become famous for its cultural tourism and rain forests that cover over 75 percent of the country.

Thus, Brunei represents two beautiful



One of the bustling beaches of Brunei

extremes, a set of contrasts for the inquisitive visitor who likes a bit of adventure. It has the almost viceroy buildings of mosques and museums on the one hand and the rugged lush equatorial rain forests on the other.

Take the Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque for example. Completed in 1958 after the

28th ruler of Brunei, Omar Ali Saifuddin, this magnificent edifice represents true Islamic art in south east Asia. Based on Islamic calligraphy, Arabesque of flowers and trees and towering engineering structures of huge columns and minarets it represents the true Islamic identity of Brunei. This edifice is an eye-opener. It would be an understatement to say that the mosque dominates the country's capital city and seat of government, Bandar Seri Begawan.

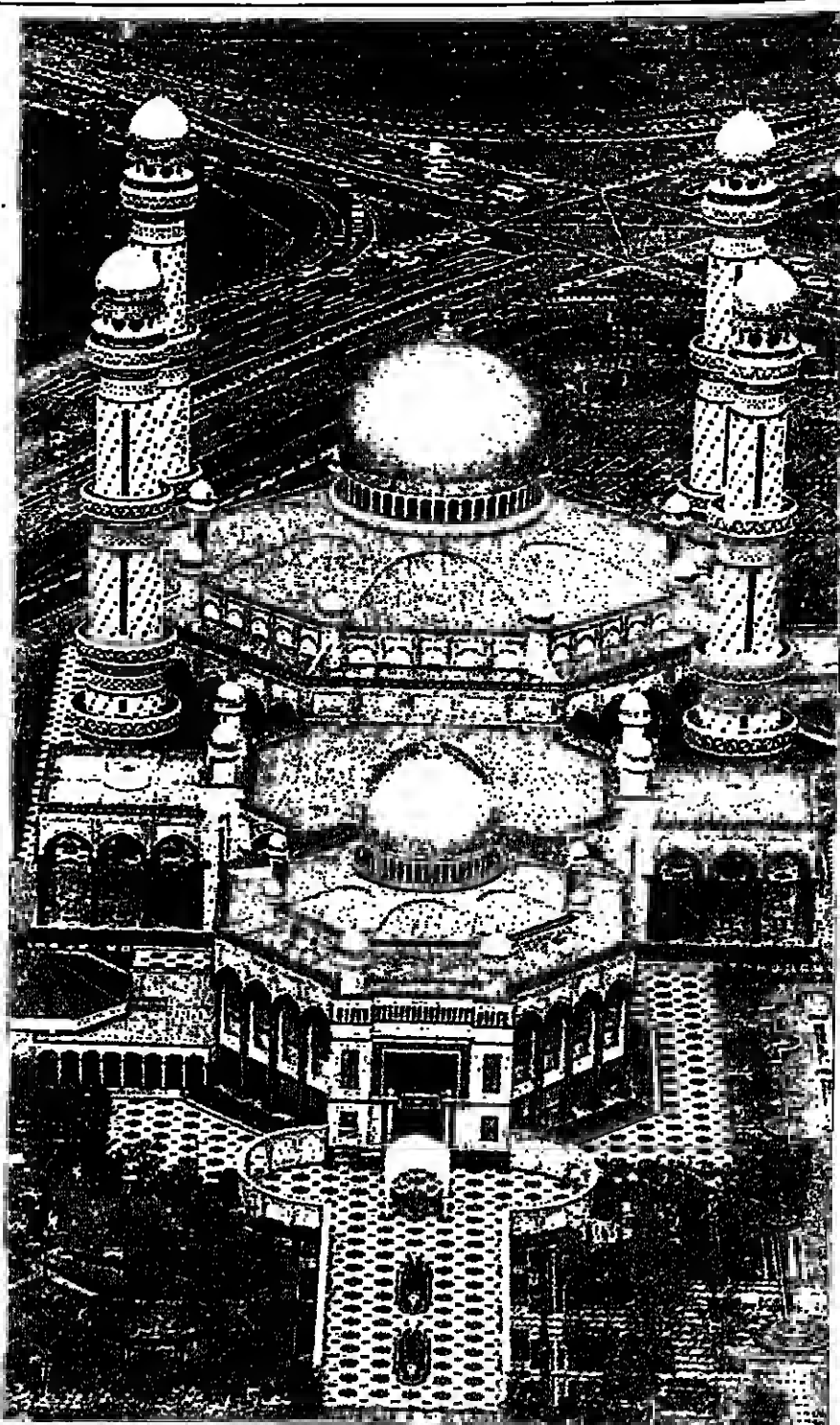
Indeed together with the Jame' Asr Hassanil Bolkiah Mosque, these structures enable visitors not only to see Islam from another perspective but to marvel at its expanse, a religion that originated from the heart of Arabia.

Despite its size, Brunei has an impressive number of palaces, monuments and museums. The Istana Nurul Al Iman is the monarch's residence. It's open to the public during the Hari Raya Puasa festival when Sultan Bolkiah and the royal family personally greet visitors.

On the cultural side, there is the Brunei Museum, the Malay Technology Museum and the Royal Regalia Museum. These houses represent the history of Brunei and its development through out the ages. In addition to ancient bronze ware, Chinese ceramics, jade and other archaeological artifacts, the museum has a unique collection of Islamic art and a private collection of elaborately gilded holy Korans.

The Malay Technology Museum on the other hand depicts old cottage industries like weaving, gold and silversmithing and local house construction. With the development of the oil industry and the boom years, these traditional industries became the memory of a bygone age.

Away from culture is the lush greenery and the rain forests. Brunei boasts of a multitude of parks and nature reserves. The



Jame' Asr Hassanil Bolkiah Mosque

concept of ecotourism has come to play a big part in Brunei's lifeline with theme, recreational parks and forests dominating the country.

Brunei is divided into four districts. The Temburong district is the heart of the rain forest. It includes the Peradayan Forest Recreation Park, the Batang Duri Park, the Outward Bound Brunei and the Kuala Belalong Mini Park.

However the Ulu Temburong National Park for instance, within the Batu Apoi Forest Reserve, can be regarded as one of the most majestic.

Rich in biodiversity, the park itself is an area of 50,000 hectares. Although the land remains largely unexplored due to its

rugged terrain, the Brunei Forestry Dept. has established nature trails, guest houses and camping sites for the interested enthusiasts.

However, for those who want to take a more relaxed holiday, they can live around the extensive coastline of the sandy Aluta or Serasa beaches. There are numerous water sporting activities to indulge in.

The visitor to Brunei would expect to see and experience a multitude of cultures, different activities, and with its numerous hotels, a great variety of accommodation designed to provide every comfort you need. Through its international airport you can easily get to the country from anywhere in the world. ■



Russians shrug off cannibalism cases

By Vanora Bennett

NOVOKUZNETSK, Russia—They talk rough and walk tough. But under the grime on their faces, Dima, Sasha, Lyosha and Vitya have sweet smiles. The homeless street kids are the picture of vulnerability.

They live in a cellar. They beg and sniff glue. And they keep out of the way of adults who only mean trouble—the drunken parents, crazed down-and-outs.

Most grown-ups ignore the ragged children underfoot in this depressed Siberian steel town, one of the many places that Russia's new capitalism forgot. Poverty is on every face and hard times breed neglect.

But one person in Novokuznetsk did take a passionate interest in children like these. He believed they were the detritus of democracy, the future drug addicts and prostitutes of the new freedom.

So Sasha Spesivtsev killed them. His last victim said before dying that Spesivtsev and his mother also cooked some of his victims—one of at least a dozen outbreaks of cannibalism reported in Russia in the last five years.

Now Spesivtsev, a mustachioed 27-year-old with a furtive grin, is in jail awaiting trial on 19 counts of murder. The unemployed man says he lured his victims home. Body parts washed up in the river Ahtu last summer, near the school where his mother, Lyudmila Spesivtseva worked.

"He came up to me once, but I ran away," Lyosha, an 11-year-old urchin, recalls of Spesivtsev. "He was always around."

In other places, the brutality of these killings—and the mere suggestion of cannibalism—might have created a sensation. But there has been no outcry in Russia. Here, such crimes are surprisingly prevalent, always in rundown provincial towns, almost always among the unemployed, the drink-sodden and the uneducated.

directly affected by him has ignored the story. "People have taken it quietly. Everyone here's too busy trying to get hold of the next crust of bread to worry about Spesivtsev," prison governor Vladimir K. Romanov said.

Even the families of the victims are taking their loss in passive fashion. They don't know how to lobby. They don't expect justice. Spesivtsev's victims were from the underclass: village girls whose parents are semi-literate workers at dying factories.

Spesivtsev comes from a family with friends in high places in town.

To his victims, the latest outrage is just one more proof that they are at the mercy of every

out of Spesivtsev's apartment. No one came, although the police were supposed to be scouring town to find the person throwing body parts into the river; Spesivtsev had a criminal record that might have made him a prime suspect—a teenage girl was found dead in his apartment in 1991.

Police only broke down his door four months later, and even then only because plumbers complained he wouldn't let them in to mend a broken pipe.

Inside, they found Spesivtsev's last victim, Olya Galtseva, 15. She was dying on the couch of stab wounds to the stomach. Nearby were a headless corpse in the bath and a skeletal rib cage in the main room.

where lights and elevators work only sporadically and violent graffiti covers the walls—the Spesivtsev family was relatively well-educated.

Meantime, no one in Novokuznetsk wants to discuss what sent Spesivtsev over the edge. "I can't say a thing. Ask the investigators," was the only comment from Gennady P. Shuryayev, chief doctor at the local psychiatric institute.

But what is certain is that he was not hungry. His mother and sister both had jobs. Police found stacks of building materials—linoleum, lightbulbs—in his home, suggesting some sort of traffic in stolen goods.

So why did he break the ultimate taboo? In his jail cell, Spesivtsev passes his days writing poems and reflections on the evils of Russia's new permissive democracy, which he believes has turned the safely regulated Soviet world he once knew into a violent free-for-all of corruption, vice and cheating politicians.

Asked by police how he justified his crimes, Spesivtsev answered with a shrug: "How many people have our democracy destroyed? Aren't people dying on railway stations because of our democracy?"

Spesivtsev is undergoing psychiatric testing to see whether he is sane enough to stand trial. His mother, imprisoned in a separate cell.

According to prison governor Romanov, psychiatrists have not yet found any reason to declare the now docile Spesivtsev criminally insane. But local journalist Zelenchukov recalls an interview with him which showed an unhealthy willingness to consider human flesh as a commodity to be traded.

"As we were leaving, Spesivtsev asked us if we couldn't organize the sale of ... his head," Zelenchukov recalled. The inmate wanted the money to buy cigarettes. "He thought some institute might want to study his brain after his execution and might pay, in advance, in cigarettes."

Alone among the threadbare inhabitants of 53 Pioneer Avenue—a rough apartment block

Lyosha and two 13-year-old friends had disappeared a month before. Police and doctors had ignored their frantic parents' appeals to find them, insisting that the trio must have run away

Olya told the police a pitiful story: She had gone out with her friends to buy batteries and bumped into Lyudmila Spesivtseva, weighed down with shopping bags. The three girls had helped Spesivtseva home. Once there, mother, son and a fierce Newfoundland dog trapped them inside.

Lyudmila M. Barashkina, Zhenya's mother who now gets paid in chicken legs rather than cash for her work in a village poultry factory, weeps when she remembers how contemptuous police officers returned her 13-year-old daughter's corpse and skull to bury—but gave her the wrong skull. At the last minute, she had to cancel the funeral.

One neighbor, pensioner Lidiya V. Vedenina, called the police early last summer to complain about the smell of death and the deafening music coming

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



Express exchange

After 15-year absence, the Food and Beverage Exchange is back! The Hotel Inter-Continental Jordan's F&B Committee published the first volume for Middle East and Africa and distributed it to sister hotels worldwide. The launching of re-implementing the magazine coincides with the 1997 year of F&B as announced by Inter-Continental worldwide.

In order to introduce the inaugural publication in style, the Hotel Inter-Continental had the first F&B Exchange delivered to Area President Mr Raymond G. Khalife in person. The messenger was dressed in a traditional Jordanian outfit and hand delivered publication copies that were also sent to the F&B Conference in Egypt and mailed to all F&B managers in the area and General Managers world wide.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE EXCHANGE



F&B Committee member Raymond G. Khalife holding a copy of the magazine.

Mimer takes public into another world

By Anca de Maio
Special to The Star

For the first time in Jordan, French pantomime artist Thierry Deschaumes gave five representations of his highly interactive and extremely entertaining 'Mime et Tysme' show, with the direct and vivid participation of the public in Amman, Irbid and Aqaba.

At his convincing invitations, children and adults took turn to join him on stage. On the spur of the moment, they found themselves transformed into impromptu mimers acting more and more naturally under the gestulated direction of the protagonist.

Originally created by Thierry and Heine Deschaumes, the representation opens with a symbolic moment of classical pantomime on the theme of "freedom". A sequence of six wordless sketches follows, illustrating either simple everyday life actions like

driving a car, keeping fit, watching TV, or other natural events: falling in love, dancing, playing an instrument. This, all in an amazing coordination of body technique and sound effects.

"Many people associate pantomime to mute gesturing, which is not true. Only words are not allowed, the rest—imitative and musical sounds—and very important elements in this type of show," says Deschaumes, a supporter of the "democratisation of pantomime."

"After I became trained in classical pantomime in Paris and Grenouille in the tradition of Marcel Marceau, the best mimers of the world, I thought of finding a formula that was different from abstract intellectualised pantomime and the imitation of passers-by on the streets of Paris, and that was interactive pantomime," he points out.

Rounded up during nine years of training and performing, Deschaumes' 'Mime-et-Tysme' show

preserves its freshness by the simple fact that the "actors" he picks up from the public differ from show to show, and from country to country. "We have been touring with this show from the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Yemen to Germany, Switzerland, England and France," he says. Addressing all socio-cultural levels and age categories (in particular children), the Deschaumes-public live representations are open to an endless variation of nuances.

"By conception, this 'live' show relies on a intuitive and psychological work. Despite a few universal rules that I can apply anywhere, I run certain risks each time, as I always have to divine the expectations and anticipate the reactions of 'this particular public,'" he explains.

"Generally, a bulky man, a coy teenager, a curious child make perfect partners, no matter how tensed or relaxed they might be," he continues. "The important thing is to make them slide into 'the imaginary' and play the game for simple fun, as if in an animated cartoon," he stresses.

In contrast to the clowns' technique whose



main source of humour is derision, a mimer never mocks at people. Moreover, his guests always leave the stage gloriously. "The aim of our being together is to act free in this imaginary world where everything is possible," he adds.

Each of us can become for a couple of minutes a thrilling magician, a famous dancer, a talented perfect instrument player so on and so forth, just like in a dream.

Pianist dazzles stage by his music

Star Staff Writer

He is no second fiddle. The music just seems to roll off the piano. In his last concert at the Royal Cultural Center, Hassan Al Mufti played the very best in classics to an audience that was only too pleased to listen to the pleasures of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven and Chopin.

Al Mufti is no ordinary musician. Born in 1965 in Baghdad, he started learning the piano at the age of six, and has never stopped playing ever since. The audience could tell that he was a true professional. The sound, the setting, the synchronized crescendos all contributed to an unexpected evening listening to arguably one of the Arab world up and coming great musicians.

Sitting from my angle, what was fascinating was the actual body language. The ease of the musical notes that rolled off the piano was truly a sight to see. The hand movements were made with such grace that you can tell that these were an essential element of the music.

The musician, who was taught at the hands of such famous names as Agnes and Muftir Bashir, seemed to revel in the classical music he was playing. We were listening to Bach and Mozart, yes, but it was a very special kind of Bach. The pianist projected that heart and soul of classical music. The thunderous crescendos of Beethoven were accompanied by the more mellowing and yet jolly sounds of Mozart and Chopin.

Al Mufti says that on the opening night, delivery is a very important part of the act and to do that you have to study the persona, the thought and the spirit of the artist very carefully.

What was interesting there was no musical note sheet in front of him. The young musician



delivered one great piece after another just from pure memory. Al Mufti had lived his characters and artists, that's why he was able to play them inside out.

But he says don't be deceived. This kind of thing requires a lot of practice. For this particular concert he spent the last four months

practicing different pieces of the great masters. This is why he was able to give not only a good delivery on the opening night but a magical one.

This is Al Mufti's fourth concert in Amman and there will likely be many more. He currently instructs people at the Jordan Music Center. ■

Jordan River Design stresses development projects



Princess Rania Al Abdullah

JORDAN RIVER FOR Development Projects (JRDP), a non-profit organization, held its annual general assembly meeting on 17 May. The meeting was presided over by Her Royal Highness Princess Rania Al Abdullah (President), Karim Kassar (Treasurer), Miss Marcell Naber (Secretary), Othman Bedier, Nader Dahabi, Ammar Khamash, Kostendi Yagham, Mr Fadi Ghandour Mr Fawaz Al Zubi and Osama Al Sayed.

JRDP was registered as a charity in Jordan in 1995. Its objectives are to improve the financial, cultural, social, educational, technical skills and the health and well being of the community at large. It's a development organization which reaches its goals through income generation and job creation for the underprivileged.

The society's first project is the JRDP, which was established in 1987 by Save the Children and now continues under the umbrella of JRDP. The meeting discussed at length the prevention of the child abuse project in cooperation with UNICEF. The society is establishing both a short- and a long-term program designed to tackle the problem of child abuse throughout Jordan.

It will now collaborate with the Prince of Wales Youth Business Trust in Britain to set up a similar program in Jordan. This would provide funding and personalized business advice for successful local business to support young individuals with entrepreneurial abilities.

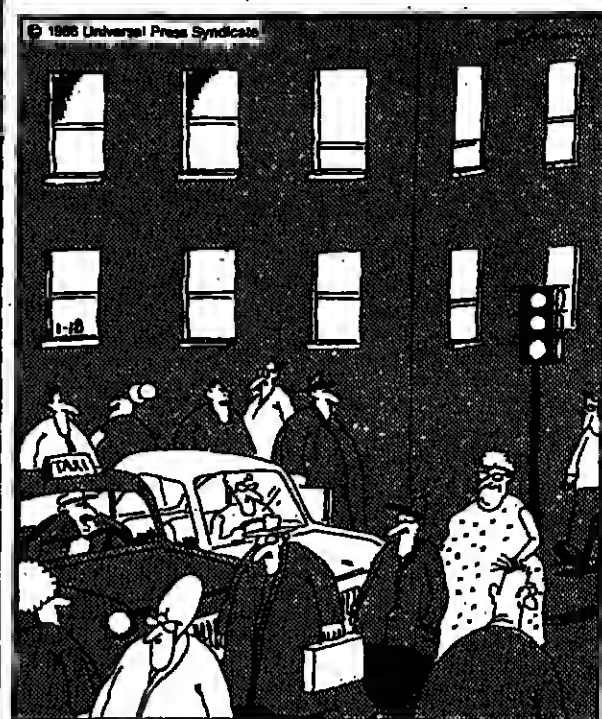
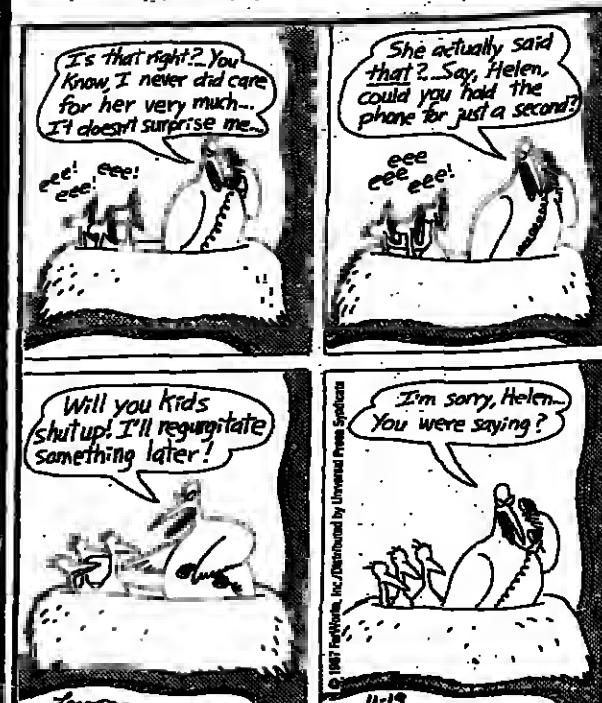
Setting up an income generating center for the women of the Wadi Al Yabis, aiming to train them to produce weavings from agricultural waste, such as bamboo can, straw and banana tree leaf. The products will include home furnishing and other accessories.

Setting up new workshop for producing ceramics and pottery.

At the end of the meeting Princess Rania said: "For those who are interested in social work, JRDP is opening its doors for anyone whose interested to be a working or an affiliate member at this society" ■

THE FAR SIDE

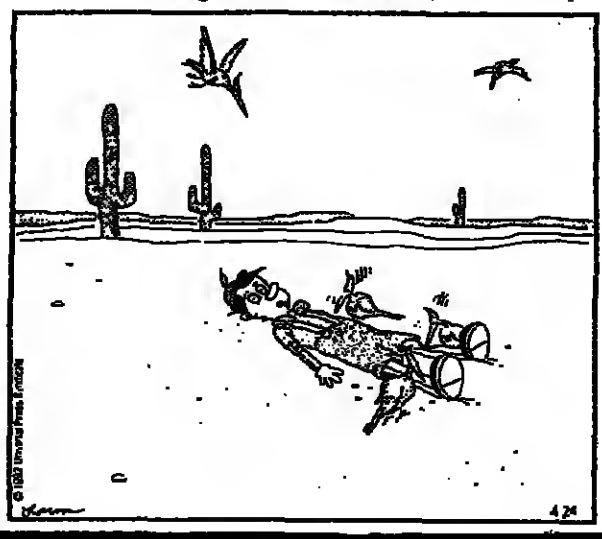
By GARY LARSON



They weren't the most evil people in the world—nor the best. They were the Village of the Darned.



"Well, I'll be... I must've been holding the dang work order like this!"



A very special event takes place at the Amman Citadel

THE DELEGATION of the European Commission in Jordan is organizing a major musical evening under the patronage of Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan Bin

Talal and Princess Sarvath on Monday 2 June 1997 at 21:00 at the Citadel of Amman.

The evening features the European Union Chamber Orchestra (EUOCO) under the baton of guest director Mr Istvan Partikanyi. EUOCO, often referred to as the Musical Ambassador of the European Union, is well-known by Jordanian musical lovers as this is its third concert in Jordan. This time the musicians are joining efforts with young Jordanian pianist Ms. Malak Al Taher.

Formed in 1981 with professional musicians from the Member States of the European Union, EUOCO has enjoyed an annual schedule of some 70 concerts worldwide and a reputation for musical excellence. Its Patron is HM Queen Sofia of Spain. EUOCO

has played in Amman in 1995 and 1996.

Ms Al Taher graduated from the National Music Conservatory and holds several awards from international schools. She is currently a Purcell Anniversary Fund Scholar at the Welsh College of Music and Drama in Wales in the United Kingdom.

The Amman Citadel is opening its doors once again to host this special event. For the past two years the Delegation has been organizing this concert, which has become an annual event awaited by the Jordanian society.

The program includes pieces by Handel (Concerto Grosso in B flat Op 6 No. 7), Purcell (Chaconne in G minor), Mozart (Divertimento in F.K.138) Faure (Nocturne for strings Op. 37).

The event is held on the occasion of Europe Day. Also this year, the European Union celebrates one of the most important landmarks of modern European history, the 40th Anniversary of the signing of the Treaties of Rome, the starting point of European integration. It is in this year's special framework that Europeans and Jordanians are getting together to enjoy this unique musical evening. ■



هكذا من الأرحل

Pirates have bridge crew tankers, lead underway w creating a s a disaster

The tip of the iceberg

Given the great increase in global shipping traffic in the past half century, and the steady proliferation of recreational and commercial vessels, it's not surprising that piracy remains a significant and manageable threat. But authorities believe the data are misleading. They argue that a great many attacks go

JOHN GRISSEM IS THE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER OF Marine Watch, AN INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY NEWS JOURNAL ABOUT OCEAN EVENTS BASED IN PORT REYES, CALIFORNIA.

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fresh perspectives on
global issues prepared for
The Star

THE WORLD PAPER

PRINTED IN FIVE LANGUAGES
ON FIVE CONTINENTS



APPEARING IN: AMMAN • BANGKOK • BEIJING • BOGOTA • BOMBAY • BOSTON • BUENOS AIRES • CAIRO • CARACAS • HONG KONG • JAKARTA • KARACHI • KUALA LUMPUR • LIMA • MANILA • MEXICO CITY • MOSCOW • PANAMA CITY • QUITO • SAN JOSE • TAIPEI • TOKYO

Today's buccaneers are all business

Pirates again stalking the seven seas

By John Grissim

ON FEBRUARY 26, 1996 in the southern Philippines, the F/V *MN-3 Normina* with a crew of 10, was fishing off Basilan Island, between Sibago and Matanal Point. Just before noon two speedboats approached. As the boats drew alongside, their occupants suddenly brandished automatic weapons and opened fire. In less than a minute the gunmen killed nine of the unarmed crew. The tenth, Jangay Ajimohon, 50, was wounded in the back of his head but managed to leap overboard and swim away while the pirates busied themselves attaching lines from the vessel to tow her. The *Normina* has not been seen since.

Late on the night of September 27, 1996, in the calm waters off the Greek island of Corfu, the luxury motor yacht *Carena* was moored in a cove. Asleep aboard her owner Keith Hedley and three friends. Four Albanian pirates aboard a speedboat that evidently had crossed the Mediterranean, approached the yacht and pulled alongside. As they attempted to cut the line to the yacht's tender, Hedley, who had been awakened by the disturbance, went topside, firing a shotgun in an attempt to foil the attack. The pirates overpowered Hedley and his friends, holding them at gunpoint while they ransacked the yacht. When Greek police, alerted by the shotgun blasts, arrived, a gun battle erupted as the pirates made their escape, but not before Hedley was hit in the ensuing crossfire and killed.

While notable for their savagery, in all other respects these incidents are representative of modern day acts of piracy that are occurring on the high seas, in coastal waters, at anchor, and even at dockside, and involving vessels of every type and flag, from sailing yachts and small ferries to huge chemical tankers and container ships. And while an organized effort to compile statistics was not begun until 1992, during which 106 attacks were reported, the yearly totals since then indicate piracy world-wide is on the rise (up 32 percent between 1995 and 1996, during which total of 224 attacks were recorded). In some regions—Indonesia, for example—occurrences have reached epidemic proportions.

The tip of the iceberg

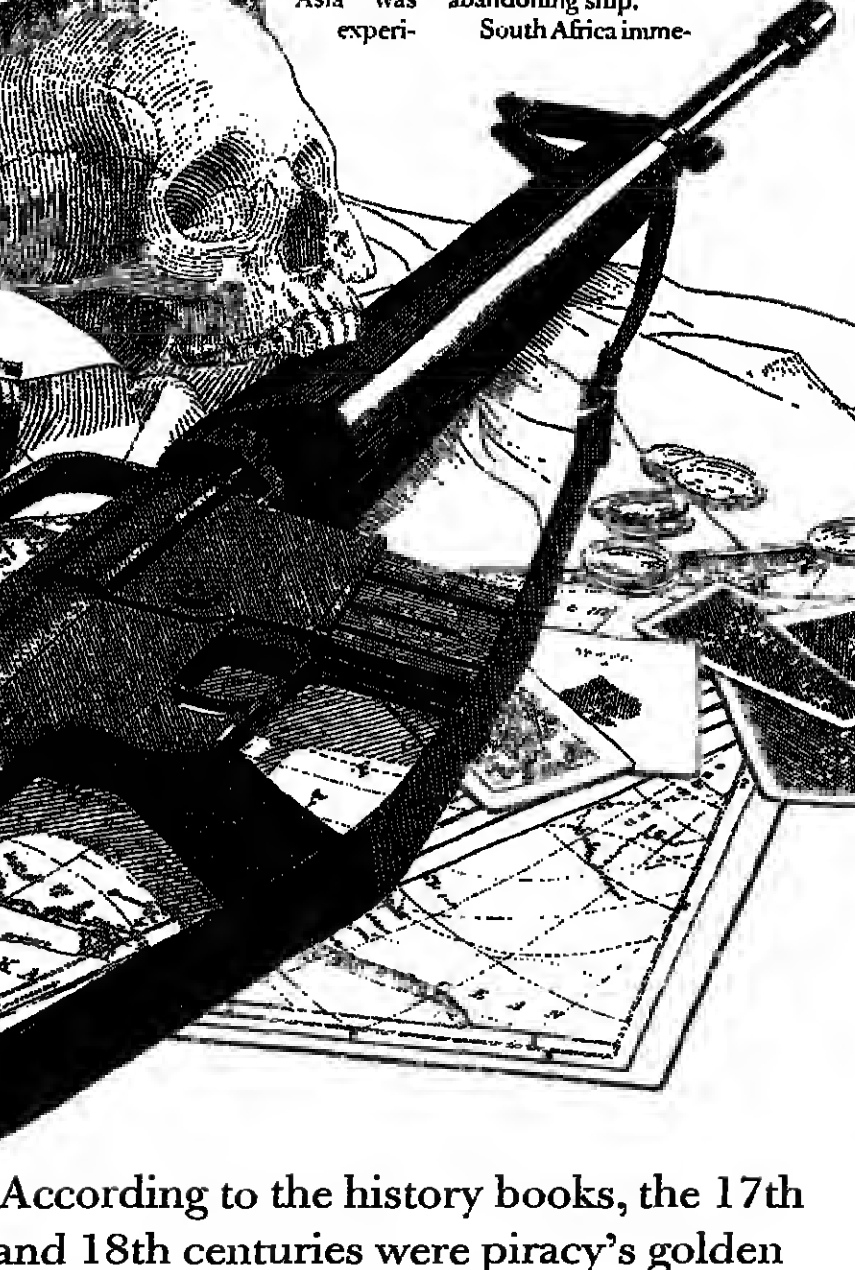
Given the great increase in global shipping traffic in the past half-century, and the steady proliferation of recreational and commercial vessels of all nationalities that sail offshore, the numbers suggest that piracy remains a significant but still manageable threat. But authorities believe the data are misleading. They argue that a great many attacks go un-

reported (perhaps twice or three times the official total), not only because victims and witnesses are murdered, but because many masters whose ships and/or crews have been attacked are too pressured by tight delivery schedules to risk the lengthy (and costly) delays in port dealing with investigations and reporting formalities that filing a report usually entails.

Historically, piracy has flourished in narrow busy shipping channels frequented by unprotected vessels carrying rich cargoes in regions that are rarely patrolled and which provide islands and coves for hiding and provisioning. Even today there are many such regions in the world, especially adja-

cent to countries experiencing political and civil unrest. Recently, a new area of vulnerability has emerged: outer anchorages in busy, crowded ports. Increasingly, pirates are targeting vessels in such anchorages where the emergency response time by harbor police may take 30 minutes to an hour or more. No less ominous have been instances, notably in South East Asian waters, where pirates have tied up the bridge crews of large oil tankers and freighters before escaping, leaving the ships underway without command, creating a scary potential for grounding or collision and a disastrous oil spill. Of equal concern to shippers were the human costs. The trauma on officers and crews was exacting a heavy toll, leaving many scarred for life, both physically and emotionally.

Faced with a growing realization that piracy had become a serious problem, the International Maritime Bureau, a non-profit division of the Paris-based International Chamber of Commerce, in 1992 convened a meeting on piracy between representatives



of the shipping industry and law enforcement to address what had become a growing problem. Shippers were critical of law enforcement for failing to respond to their needs, while police complained of a lack of specific reports on piracy that they could effectively investigate. As a result, the IMB in October of that year established the Regional Piracy Centre (RCC), operating out of its Far East regional bureau in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia—largely because of Southeast Asia was experi-

enced the highest number of incidents.

Financed by voluntary contributions from the shipping and insurance industries, the RCC began offering an around-the-clock help line (phone, fax and telex) to vessels by warning them of piracy activities and assisting them in the event of attack. The center also began issuing daily reports of suspicious or unexplained craft movements and news of armed robbery at sea. In addition, the RCC began collecting and analyzing incidents of piracy worldwide in national and international waters and issuing consolidated reports to interested organizations, including the UN's International Maritime Organization.

Assemble the fire hoses

Gradually, as word of the center's existence spread through the maritime and law enforcement communities, its mission began to pay off. Ship masters suspecting their vessels were about to be boarded called the center's hot line

and were advised to immediately increase speed and to waggle their sterns to increase difficulty of boarding. The captains were further instructed to turn on all deck lights, train search lights onto the attackers' boats, assemble their crews on deck and get the fire hoses ready to fight them off. If the attackers succeeded in boarding, however, they were to cease all resistance.

An inside job

In the meantime, the hijackings, frauds and phantom ships has continued. On Christmas Day, 1996, the master of the 15,000 ton freighter *Jalan*, bound for Iraq with a cargo of sugar and a crew of 28, sent out a May Day call advising he was off the coast of Cape Town, South Africa and abandoning ship. South Africa imme-

The Hijacking of the Anna Sierra

In the fall of 1995 an incident occurred that provided a convincing demonstration of the Regional Piracy Center's raison d'être. On September 12, 1995, the M/V *Anna Sierra*, a Cyprus-registered general cargo vessel, left Bangkok's port of Koh Si Chang, Thailand, and headed for Manila, carrying 240,000 bags of sugar worth US\$5 million. On the night of September 13, 25-30 masked pirates, many armed with machine guns, appeared in two speed boats alongside the ship, and stormed aboard. Moving quickly, they shot off the lock to the ship's bridge, rounded up the captain and crew at gunpoint, and tied them up.

After ransacking the ship's quarters, cleaning out the captain's safe, and stealing all the crew's property, several of the pirates left the ship in one of the speed boats that had been standing by alongside. Those who remained took command of the ship. They handcuffed their prisoners—25 in all—in a string, showing merciless indifference.

Next, on the night of September 15, the pirates marched their prisoners out to the weather deck and divided their captives into two groups. The first group was unhandcuffed and thrown overboard next to a makeshift raft made of wooden planks tied to several oil drums. A few hours later the second group was summarily jettisoned in a small life raft. Neither group was given water, food or provisions—or told where they were.

The following day, by the merest chance, both groups of survivors were spotted and rescued by two Vietnamese fishing boats in waters 60 miles off the coast of Vietnam. One of the boats sailed directly to its home port in Vietnam, where the rescued crew members called the *Anna Sierra*'s owners who in turn immediately contacted the Regional Piracy Center on September 17th.

What happened next illustrates a strange new twist to modern day piracy—phantom ships. According to RPC Manager John Martin, after the pirates jettisoned the *Anna Sierra*'s crew, they re-painted the ship, renaming her the *Arctic Sea* [sic] and sailed her to the Chinese port of Beihai in the Gulf of Tonkin, 350 miles west of Hong Kong. Just outside of port, a speed boat visited the ship and forged documents were delivered to the pirate captain.

"We know this because just after the ship arrived, an agent employee of the China Ocean Shipping Company there spotted the [disguised vessel] and reported it to the company's head office in Beijing," Martin explained. "They immediately called the International Maritime Bureau's office in London who in turn asked for the ship to be detained. Chinese authorities in Beihai ordered the ship to come into port and tie up. On arrival, they put armed guards on board, took their passports, and confined them to the ship until they conducted an investigation."

According to Martin, the buyer of the *Anna Sierra*'s cargo was a Chinese company in Beihai that had been defrauded of \$300,000 in April, 1995 by a Hong Kong-based gang. The victimized company could have reported the fraud to Chinese police but feared being accused of collusion and economic sabotage, a capital crime.

Knowing the company's dilemma, the gang offered it a cargo of sugar which they would agree to sell for a \$300,000 discount, thereby allowing the company to recoup its earlier "loss." The company agreed and the gang subsequently scouted the region until they found a ship loading sugar, hijacked it, and arranged for the delivery of forged papers with back-dated contracts and delivery amounts. The gang—at least the 14 pirates hired by the gang—were caught red-handed in Beihai.

However, when Martin succeeded in demonstrating that the *Arctic Sea*'s papers were clumsy forgeries, and misspelled at that, the gangsters in Hong Kong had a second set of documents forged, then arranged for a local company in Beihai to present them to the authorities. Martin quickly countered with documents of his own showing the those papers, too, were forged.

"What happened next was another company came out of the woodwork, saying 'Ah, yes, that first company was run by gangsters. We are the real company.' We then destroyed the second company's documents, but no sooner did we do so than a third company stepped forward. And each time documents got better."

While the document dueling continued ashore, involving lengthy delays, the *Anna Sierra*, tied at dockside waiting, began slowly listing due to water in her holds and engine room. Finally, the ship was towed away from the pier and beached nearby.

At this writing, more than 18 months after the incident, the *Anna Sierra* lies mired in the mud, her remaining cargo slated to be discharged at some uncertain future date. Of the 14 pirates, 10 were sent home to Indonesia while the tin has no idea of what has happened to the remaining four.

—John Grissim

JOHN GRISSIM IS THE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER OF *Marine Watch*, AN INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY NEWS JOURNAL ABOUT OCEAN EVENTS BASED IN POINT REYES, CALIFORNIA.

SEA WOLVES FEASTING

Pirates run rings around the authorities

Brazil responds with a shrug

By Jaures Mazzone

PIRACY IN BRAZIL's Atlantic ports is on the upswing. Ships anchored off the ports of Salvador, Rio de Janeiro and Santos are the most common victims, but ships plying the Amazon river and its tributaries are now being attacked. Local authorities have neither the means nor, apparently, the desire to do much about this trend.

The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) classifies Brazil as one of the highest risk areas in the world for pirate attacks on ships. Last year, 15 incidents were officially reported. But the actual number of attacks by pirates is far greater, since authorities pay little attention to these crimes and rarely register them.

Ship crews and masters are discouraged from reporting incidents because they risk further attack while waiting in port for the incident to be investigated.

Brazilian port agents say shipping lines now prefer to anchor well outside Santos, Salvador and Rio de Janeiro bays until space is available. According to The Baltic and International Marine Council (BIMCO), the largest association of shipping companies, the US Maritime Security Council has asked the Brazilian government to take better preventative measures against piracy in its ports.

This may not happen so quickly. An investigation by the US Coast Guard discovered that information on pirate attacks is not reaching the proper Brazilian authorities because of a communication bottleneck between state and federal officials.

The Regional Piracy Centre (RPC), based in Malaysia, also reports that the situation in Brazil remains serious. Organized gangs are able to assault crews and loot vessels almost at will. Furthermore, the raw data does not account for the attitude of the local authorities. After highlighting an attack on the *Bow Fortune* at Salvador, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) asked the Brazilian authorities what they were doing about it.

According to the RPC's 1996 report, "A direct reply has yet to be received, but perhaps the reaction of the port authorities at Aratu and Salvador will suffice. On July 8 at Aratu, while the master of the *Kapitan Belker* and two other crew were being knifed and pistol whipped in the master's cabin by six pi-

rates, the port authorities failed to respond to pleas for help sent by VHF radio, the only means of communicating with them. On July 25 at Salvador, the police were called immediately after three pirates robbed the master at gun point. They arrived the next day."

One of the big questions prompted by this upsurge in piracy is the role of Brazil's police and maritime authorities. There have been hints at collusion between these agencies and the pirates they are supposed to combat.

BIMCO reports that one local industry source claims, "The pirates are well prepared and come on board knowing

costs more in the long run to put through a claim. So the problem is in fact bigger than is officially registered."

According to BIMCO, pirate attacks are even repeated in the same spots and on the same ships with little reaction from authorities. The Oldendorf-operated container ship *San Marino* was boarded twice last year in the port of Rio de Janeiro by armed pirates. In the second attack, the ship was anchored in an officially designated "safe waiting area" just outside the port.

During the raid on the *San Marino*, the second officer managed to send a Mayday message to a passing vessel,

can only be done with the knowledge and/or approval of someone who really knows the ship's schedule and cargo details. The nature of the assault ... can only mean that more of the same is to be expected ... if the local authorities do not take the necessary action."

In the recent US Coast Guard review of ports, it was noted that Brazilian officials don't have the personnel or equipment to keep their ports safe from pirate attacks. The pirates, on the other hand, often have the latest technology at their disposal.

While the pirates in modern speed boats are armed with Uzis, state-of-the-art radios and infra-red night equipment, the police—chugging along in old boats and without modern communication equipment—sim-

Civil war occupies Sri Lanka's navy

Colombo's regional future held hostage by local tradition

By Harold Pieris

TRADITION DIES HARD. Despite opening its economy and strengthening its navy, Sri Lanka still loses over US\$200 million annually to pirates whose depredations threaten the development of the country's capital, Colombo, as a major regional port.

Sri Lanka's island coastline is dotted with small communities, particularly around the ports, whose residents have been living for generations on piracy and smuggling. It is a way of life for these people.

The most notorious spot is Hekita, three miles north of Colombo. From here pirates venture out at nightfall in their motor boats—or more primitive craft—to the ships waiting to enter Colombo's port. Armed with knives and other implements, the pirates board the ships, break into the cargo containers and plunder whatever they can. Once their boats are filled, they smuggle their plunder ashore, selling to middle-men who channel it into Sri Lanka's markets.

Armed with generations of experience, these pirates know which ships to attack, what goods are saleable and to plunder them. Reported incidents alone account for losses estimated at \$200 million a year, and these are occurring at a time when market forces have turned against the pirates—the losses were much higher when the country operated a closed economy.

During those years, many goods were in short supply, generating a demand the pirates were well positioned to meet. In 1977 the country opened its economy, removing import controls and other restrictions. There was a flood of goods into the country, eliminating the scarcities that allowed pirates to charge a premium for their plunder.

But incidents of piracy still continue to be reported to the Sri Lanka Port Authority. The pirates adapted by undercutting the prices charged for legitimate goods, creating a market based on bargain prices. It is a market they have held onto in spite of a marked im-

provement in the quality of the Sri Lankan navy.

In 1980, the country's navy which was largely a ceremonial unit. Faced with the need to combat the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam—who are fighting the Sri Lankan government to establish a separate state for Tamils—it was converted into a modern fighting unit.

Today, the navy patrols the island's waters in vessels equipped with the latest technology. They combat the "Sea Tigers" and are on the look out for ships and other craft bringing arms and ammunition to the Tigers in their strongholds in the northern and eastern regions of Sri Lanka. This, however, is a full scale war—in order to fulfill its primary mission, the navy cannot pay much attention to piracy, particularly around the port of Colombo, which is well to the south of the main areas of conflict.

This need to turn a blind eye is causing problems. Sri Lanka's government is modernizing the Port of Colombo and advertising it as a major center in South Asia for transshipment from the port, a hope that may not be realized if the region acquires a reputation for unchecked piracy.

Sri Lanka's Minister of Ports and Shipping, M.H.M. Ashraff, says: "The government is highly concerned over the increasing number of incidents of piracy in our territorial waters and is committed to take all measures to eradicate the menace."

He adds: "Despite the adoption of numerous steps the incidence of piracy has not declined. The Colombo Port is recognized as a transshipment port in the region. But wrong signals are being sent to the international community that Sri Lanka is not a safe place for such transshipment because of these incidents."

According to the Security division of the Sri Lanka Port Authority, the number of reported pirate attacks in the territorial waters of Colombo has increased from 46 in 1995 to 58 last year. The security division believes that the number of actual attacks were much higher, but many such attacks were not reported to the authorities.

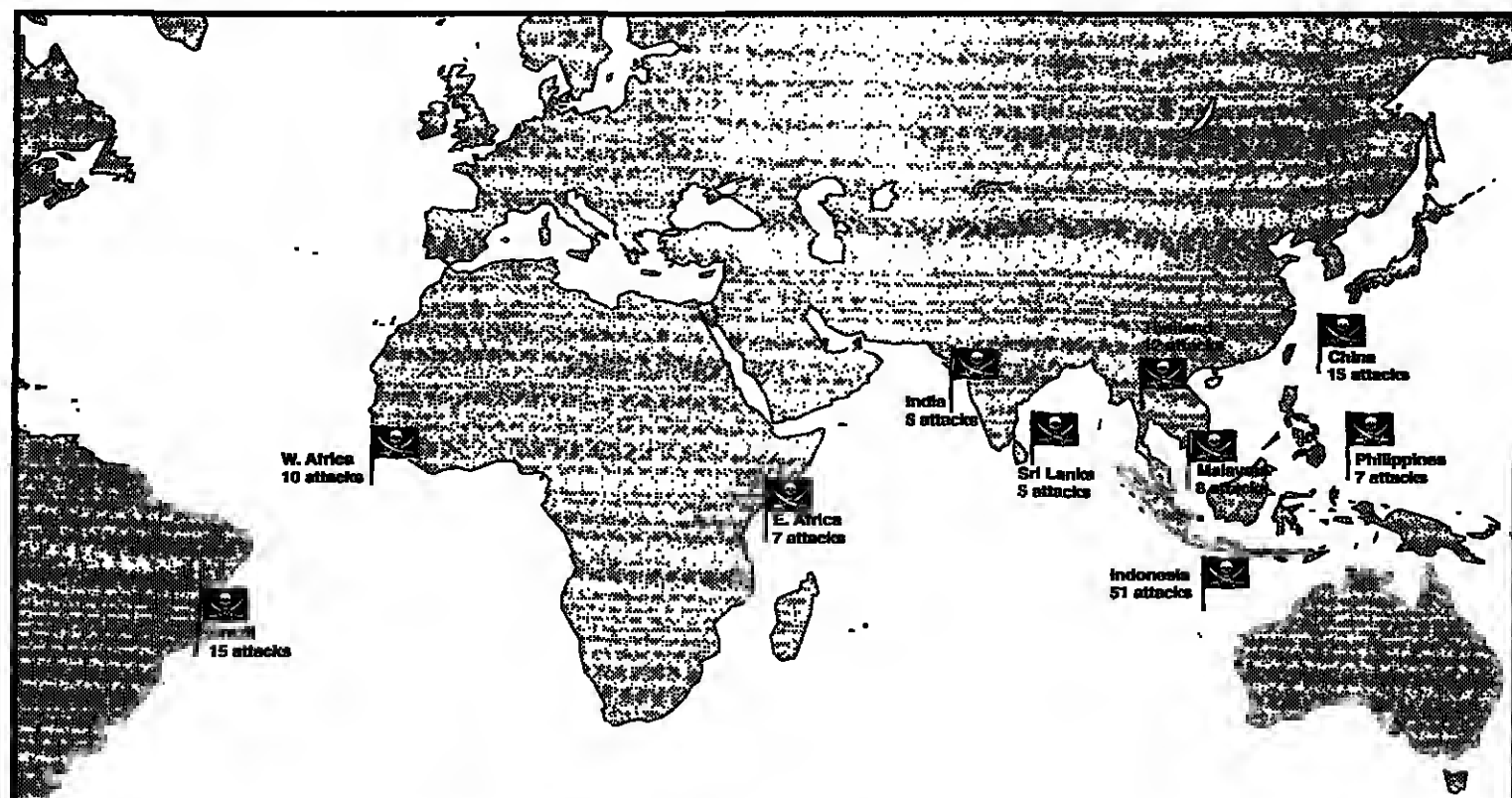
The absence of legislation or quick, efficient enforcement measures discourages many ship owners from reporting pirate attacks to the authorities. Sri Lanka's penal code does not treat piracy as a distinct criminal offense. Instead acts of piracy when detected are dealt with as theft or robbery. Furthermore, in Sri Lanka court cases can drag on for years and absolute proof is necessary to convict an accused.

As a result of these deficiencies in the legal machinery, pirates act with boldness and with impunity, almost scoffing at the law. It is widely recognized that new laws and enforcement measures are needed to wipe out this menace that is handicapping Colombo's strongly contested bid to become the region's transshipment center.

According to Ashraff, "legislation will soon be introduced to curb the increasing incidents of piracy in Sri Lankan waters and to deal with 'piracy' as manifested in modern times."

In its November 1996 issue, Lloyd's *Shipping Economist* gives the Sri Lankan government a strong signal that it should act sooner rather than later. It warns that "there is mounting evidence to suggest that if the issue of piracy is not addressed seriously and properly, the consequences could lead to disaster for Sri Lanka which is modernizing the [port of Colombo] and hopes to earn more from it."

HAROLD PIERIS, FORMER EDITOR OF *The Daily Observer* NEWSPAPER, IS A COLOMBO-BASED WRITER.



Blackbeard's successors

The top 10 areas for reported pirate attacks in 1996

exactly which containers to target—usually the high value, small volume goods. The police always seem to take a long time to react and there is never anyone left to arrest by the time they arrive. The crews are informed not to react and half the time the incidents are not reported because it leads to further delays and

which relayed it to the pilot station. The local agent reportedly asked the Brazilian navy and the port authority for assistance. He is still waiting for an answer.

According to BIMCO, the master's report argues, "Such a well planned and ruthless hit on a ship in a safe area

ply can't keep up.

Of late, reports have been filtering in from the press in Manaus of pirate attacks on Brazil's busy river traffic. In December there were two armed assaults on vessels plying the Amazon and its tributaries. The first on the Solimoes River was against the *Voyage I*, a passenger ship. Pirates, armed with Kalashnikov machine guns, threatened to blow up the ship with grenades unless they got everything they wanted. They quickly made off with \$50,000 in cash and a collection of jewelry taken from the passengers.

During the second attack—on a supply ship—the pirates arrived in high powered hydrofoils and made off with five outboard motors before the crew or master even had a chance to react. Again, by the time the authorities arrived there was nobody left to arrest.

JAURES MAZZONE IS A SAO PAULO-BASED CORRESPONDENT FOR *Brazil Watch*.

SEVEN SEAS

Continued from page 1

between hijacking and conspiracy to defraud, can quickly become blurred. Complicating matters are the complex, overlapping layers of ownership and responsibility that characterize the shipping industry today. The *Jalan* is owned by a company based in Panama, but it is registered in Belize, and managed by SeaTimes Shipping out of Singapore. The captain allegedly at the center of the attempted theft is from Ghana while his crew was comprised of Indians, Burmese and Bangladeshis.

Such combinations are widespread throughout the shipping industry. Add to this the commonplace involvement of companies that merely lease vessels for specified periods for certain cargoes belonging to other shippers, and the task of establishing accountability is formidable indeed.

Moreover, even when a piratical act has clearly been committed, the victims are often at a loss to find help.

"Many seafarers will tell you nobody cares," an exasperated RPC Director John Martin says. "When an attack occurs in the middle of the ocean, the flag state cannot or will not investigate. And when the ship arrives in

port, the authorities there deny jurisdiction and show little or no interest. You see that throughout the world: the local authorities just don't care."

As for the future effort to curb piracy around the world, Martin sees signs of encouragement. "I think we will improve our data collection and anti-piracy measures to reduce attacks. We won't be able to solve the great mass of attacks that do occur but by continuing to develop close cooperation with local law enforcement agencies and giving them intelligence of better and better quality, they'll be able to move aggressively and make arrests. Better policing is the key."

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The Star's TV GUIDE

Programs on JTV
from 31 May—6 June

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY

3:30—Holy Koran
3:35—French Programs
4:00—Globe World Sport
Special
4:30—Innovation (Doc.)
4:50—Tilt
5:15—Blue Healers
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Hangin' with Mr. Cooper
8:30—Magazine 01
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Macgyver
11:15—Feature Film

SUNDAY

3:30—Holy Koran
3:35—French Programs
4:00—Global Family
4:30—Energy Express
4:50—Our World
5:15—American Chart Show
6:10—French Programs
7:00—News in French
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Fresh Prince of Bel Air
8:00—Cinema, Cinema
8:30—The Churchill's
9:10—Renegade
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—One West Waikiki
11:15—Sisters

MONDAY

3:30—Holy Koran
3:35—Spirou
4:00—Neighbors
4:30—In the Wild (Doc.)
5:00—Tilt
6:10—French Programs
7:00—News in French
7:30—French Programs
7:35—Parenthood Magazine
8:30—Discover Magazine
8:30—Murder She Wrote
9:10—Highlander
10:00—News at Ten



Janet Jackson in Album Show, Tuesday at 5:10 pm

10:30—The Write Verdict
11:15—Homicide

TUESDAY

3:30—Holy Koran
3:35—French Programs
4:00—Super Sport Follies
4:30—Dog House
5:00—Square One
5:10—Album Show
6:00—French Programs
7:00—News in French
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Coach (Comedy)
8:00—Tilt
8:30—Encounter
9:10—The Nature of Things (Doc.)
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—West Beach

WEDNESDAY

3:30—Holy Koran
3:35—French Program
4:00—Neighbors
4:25—Spellbinder
4:50—Forests of the World (Doc.)
5:30—Bordertown
6:00—French Programs
7:00—News in French
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Grace Under Fire (Comedy)
8:00—Soldier's Diary
8:10—Challenges (Local talk show)
9:10—Spencer for Hire (Drama)
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—West Beach

THURSDAY

3:30—Holy Koran
3:35—French Programs
4:00—Out of this World
4:30—They Came from Outer Space
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Step by Step
8:00—World Echo
8:30—The Oprah Winfrey Show (New talk show)
9:10—Kung Fu
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—Feature Film
12:00—Taratata

FRIDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:05—Leo the Lion (Cartoon)
3:30—Wish Bone
4:05—Neighbors
4:30—Winners Down Under
5:15—Varieties
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Families Matters
8:00—The Health Show
8:30—Hawkeye (Drama)
9:10—500 Nations
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Mini Series
12:00—NBA

PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS

SAMEDI

3:30—Dessins animés
Spirou
6:00—Série policière
Sueurs froides
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine
Ziva

DIMANCHE

3:30—Dessins animés
Spirou
6:00—Magazine
Faut pas rêver
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Documentaire

LUNDI

3:30—Dessins animés
Spirou
6:00—Documentaire
Pégase
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine scientifique
Cinq sur cinq

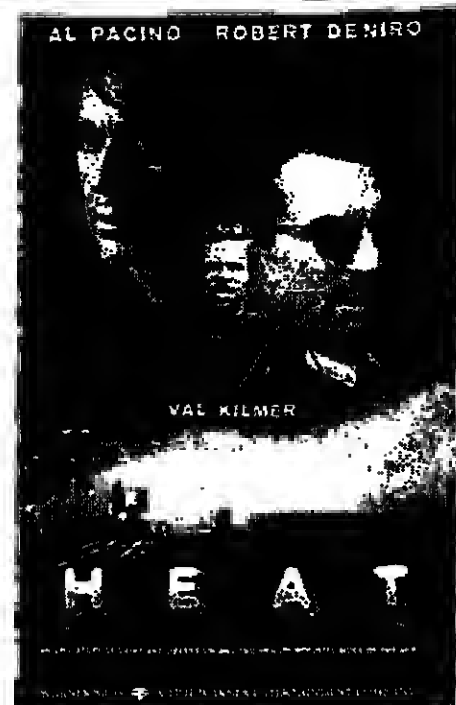
MARDI

3:30—Dessins animés
Spirou

Programs are subject to change by JTV

Highlight of the week at the Pleasure Dome

● **HEAT**: When superstars Al Pacino and Robert De Niro square off, Heatsizzles. And its cool, too, crafted with cutting edge style by writer/director Michael Mann (The Last of the Mohicans) and paced by dazzling sequences that include a bank heist that USA Today's Mike Clark calls "the greatest action scene of recent times." "There is no one who does not give the kind of performance that ranks with the very best work of their careers," Kenneth Turan of the Los Angeles Times wrote. Val Kilmer, Jon Knight, Tom Sizemore and Ashley Judd are among the co-stars who add nitro to Heat's sleekly glib tale of a brilliant mastermind (De Niro) who pulls off million-dollar crimes with obsessive precision and a flashfire L.A. cop (Pacino) equally driven to stop him. How far will each man go? Heat goes way beyond the expectations of the cops and criminals genre—and into the realm of movie masterpiece.



Video Releases

We've assembled this interesting collection of movies for you this week:

■ **Sommersby**: She knew his face. His touch His voice. She knew everything about him. But the truth, Richard Gere & Jodie Foster in this period romance rich in mystery, detail and splendid performances. "The best romance since Gone with the Wind."

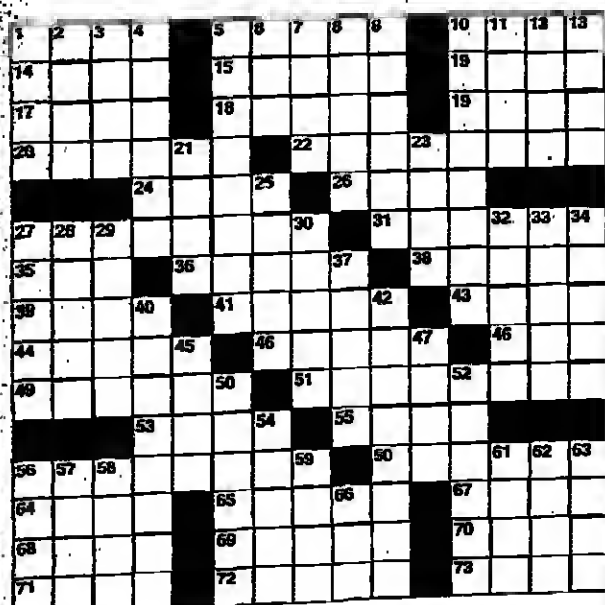
■ **Curacao**: Two men hardened by life with completely opposite personalities. But they are both exiles sharing a dark secret from the past, nevertheless when they meet on the island they are not only forced to live together but also to help each other.

■ **Citizen Cohn**: As a leading member of the McCarthy witch-hunts. He had the power to destroy lives... Stunning in a grim, unsparring depiction of a controversial man. RUTHLESS. BRUTAL. DESTRUCTIVE. "The true story of Roy Cohn."

■ **The set Up**: The perfect set up for fans of electrifying thrillers. High-tech larceny, seductive treachery and explosive action power. This is a thriller starring Billy Zane and Mia Sara.

Courtesy: "The Pleasure Dome"
Tel: 676558 - Fax: 5538087

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS
1 Tiny particle
3 Puerile
10 Puerile
14 Marriage
15 Subtle
16 Early on
17 Howard role
18 Long in the tooth
19 Make whole
20 Nothing more than
21 Seattle's Super
22 Profound
24 Johnny of song
26 Pastoral
27 Maximum velocity
31 Bristle
35 Columbus school letters
36 Writer
38 Glasgow
39 Genius of
41 Axis grinder
44 Spry
46 Powerful person
48 First lady
49 Guardian of witches
51 Buggy
53 Hypocritical language
54 Cup of cheer
56 Cup of cheer
58 Strong-willed woman
64 Small
65 Insects
67 Planet Peter
68 Exploit
69 "born free" (Rousseau)
70 Zest
71 London gallery
72 Poplar tree
73 Butterflies
77 Tilt
78 Homicide
79 Taratata
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Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Arafat redoute un nouveau conflit israélo-arabe

Le président palestinien Yasser Arafat a déclaré mardi qu'il craignait une nouvelle guerre israélo-arabe en cas d'échec du sommet égypto-israélien qui se tenait dans le Sinaï. «Il y aura une catastrophe qui affectera l'ensemble du Proche-Orient, et je crains la guerre, si le processus de paix n'est pas rapidement relancé», a affirmé M. Arafat dans une interview publiée par le quotidien israélien Haaretz.

A l'issue de leur rencontre de mardi, le président égyptien Hosni Moubarak (notre photo) et le Premier ministre israélien Benjamin Netanyahou ont décidé de se revoir dans les semaines à venir. «En ce qui concerne la reprise des négociations entre Israël et les Palestiniens, nous n'avons rien conclu», a déclaré Hosni Moubarak à l'issue de ce sommet. Benjamin Netanyahou s'est lui contenté de qualifier ses entretiens de «début positif», ajoutant qu'il était encore nécessaire de travailler. Cette semaine, les efforts diplomatiques devraient continuer pour tenter de débloquer la situation, et une rencontre entre le Premier ministre israélien et le roi Hussein devrait avoir lieu. Le président égyptien s'était lui-même rendu samedi en Jordanie pour s'entretenir avec le roi Hussein des moyens de relancer le processus de paix.



Culture

Les trois villes de la vie de Mona Saudi

Depuis qu'elle a réalisé sa première sculpture voilà plus de trente ans, Mona Saudi ne cesse de voyager entre trois villes: Amman, Beyrouth et Paris. Cette artiste jordanienne, considérée comme la plus célèbre hors du royaume hachémite, raconte son parcours artistique et dévoile les projets qu'elle nourrit pour sa ville natale.

SECON

Etant donné son caractère extrêmement répressif, la loi temporaire sur la presse et la publication imposée par le gouvernement le 17 mai dernier devait provoquer des réactions à la taille de l'événement.

Les actions spontanées décidées par la Syndicat des journalistes ont reflété l'atmosphère d'amertume et de révolte qui règne au sein des journalistes et propriétaires d'hebdomadaires. Mais il semble malheureusement que ce mouvement de protestation soit mal orienté.

Tout d'abord, beaucoup de contestataires estiment que cette loi est inconstitutionnelle. Or, cette question ne peut être tranchée sans l'avis de la Haute Cour de Justice. Et jusqu'à présent, aucun d'entre eux n'a entrepris une démarche en ce sens.

D'autre part, les démissions présentées par les présidents de plusieurs associations professionnelles ne peuvent être justifiées par le souci de solidarité avec les journalistes. Ce genre de fuite en avant n'est pas susceptible de contrecarrer les mesures antidémocratiques adoptées par le gouvernement. De tels actes transforment la lutte visant à défendre la liberté d'expression et celle de la presse en une affaire personnelle. En effet, une fois le poste de président vacant, le vice-président doit occuper cette place, ou bien le syndicat doit procéder à de nouvelles élections. De même, la démission des conseils des syndicats doit entraîner de nouvelles élections.

Quant aux actions décidées par les députés de l'opposition, elles s'intéressent elles aussi uniquement à l'aspect formel de ce problème. Motivés par des raisons tactiques, ils se sont lancés dans la préparation d'une pétition appelant à la tenue d'une session extraordinaire. Or, ils savent très bien qu'ils ne pourront jamais recueillir les 41 signatures nécessaires à la tenue d'une telle session. Et on peut facilement imaginer que même s'ils y parvenaient, l'Assemblée adopterait à une large majorité les traits généraux de ce nouveau code de la presse.

En somme, il semble que rien ne soit fait pour tenter de négocier directement avec le gouvernement sur la base de propositions équilibrées, et ce à l'aide de réels moyens de pressions.

Il reste aujourd'hui à souhaiter que les journalistes jordaniens puissent définir un plan d'action adéquat lors de leur assemblée générale prévue le 6 juin. Et si le conseil des ministres ne prend pas en compte leurs revendications, ils ne doivent surtout pas faire machine arrière. Ils ne doivent en effet pas oublier que cette loi temporaire sera débattue lors de la tenue de la première session parlementaire, après l'élection d'une nouvelle assemblée.

Hussein Abu-Ramman

Le Jourdain, on y revient. Tous les jeudis dans le Star 645 380

Récemment à Amman avec sa dernière exposition de dessins et de sculptures qu'elle a présentée dans sa propre maison au centre Abdouh, l'artiste jordanienne Mona Saudi, réinstallée depuis peu au Liban, confesse son amour pour les trois villes auxquelles elle se sent appartenir: Paris, Beyrouth et Amman.

«La maison de l'être humain, c'est la terre entière. En ce qui me concerne, j'aime vivre là où il y a des choses qui se passent, et c'est vrai qu'il y a

trois endroits dans le monde où je me sens chez moi», déclare Mona Saudi en parlant de «la ville de l'art par excellence» - Paris, de «la capitale de la culture dans le monde arabe» - Beyrouth, et bien entendu, d'Amman, là où voilà cinquante-deux ans, elle recevait le «précieux cadeau» de la vie.

«Très jeune, j'ai eu le sentiment que, pendant une période limitée de temps qui m'a été accordée, je devais produire quelque chose de durable. Et c'est dans cet esprit que

j'ai commencé à m'exprimer d'une manière créative par la sculpture, le dessin et parfois la poésie», confesse-t-elle.

Lycéenne à Amman, au début des années soixante, Mona Saudi aime se retrouver devant l'amphithéâtre romain pour contempler les sculptures encore éparpillées sur le site. «La Citadelle et l'Amphithéâtre sont les premiers et les seuls témoignages du passé qui m'ont fait rêver à l'histoire et l'art de cette région avant la grande découverte de l'art oriental ancien lorsque j'étais à Paris», raconte-t-elle.

«Je ne suis toujours identifiée à l'esprit d'abstraction de l'art oriental, (qu'il soit égyptien, sumérien ou grec), dans le sens où la nature n'est pas imitée, mais recrée de façon synthétique».

A quinze ans elle s'initie à l'art plastique dans l'atelier du peintre Muhanna Durra. «Le premier artiste professionnel jordanien». Mais ce n'est qu'à Beyrouth, une année plus tard, qu'elle entre en contact pour la première fois avec un véritable milieu d'artistes et sculpteurs d'art moderne. «A Paris, je suis partie pour traduire en réalité un rêve d'enfance», explique-t-elle. Etudiante à l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts, elle réalise en 1965 sa première sculpture en pierre, intitulée Mère-Terre et qui, selon l'artiste, contient l'essence de toute son œuvre ultérieure d'une manière «à la fois définitive et ouverte».

En 1969 elle s'installe à Beyrouth, «une ville à la fois

arabe et internationale». Là, elle approfondit son travail avec la pierre, en cherchant ses propres formes, éléments, outils. «Très jeune, j'avais fait quelques exercices en plâtre et en argile, mais j'ai choisi de tailler la pierre, car, pour moi, elle représente le matériel vivant où se cachent les formes que je cherche», précise-t-elle.

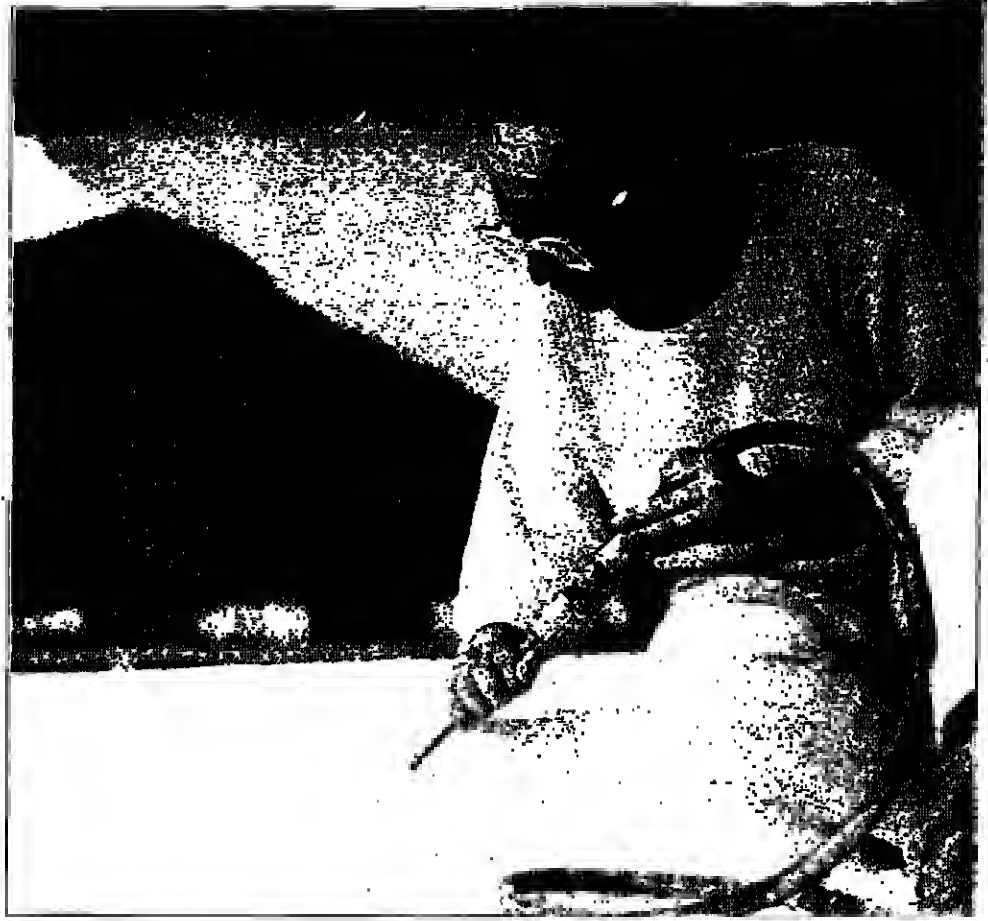
Les formes du début, inspirées par le corps humain, commencent alors à prendre les rondeurs d'une graine ou d'un œuf.

«La forme pousse de l'intérieur, et, en enlevant le surplus, je la délivre de là», poursuit-elle. La joie ressentie, après des mois de travail, la naissance d'une nouvelle forme, est suivie par un sentiment de frustration. Plus elle travaille, plus elle a le sentiment d'avoir fait peu, car l'univers des formes est illimité. Et c'est comme cela que sa quête continue avec «patience, amour et espoir».

Dix sculptures pour Amman

De retour en Jordanie en 1983, trois de ses œuvres monumentales sont érigées à la Municipalité d'Amman, la Banque du Caire et l'Université de Technologie d'Irbid. En taillant le calcaire, le marbre et le granit de différentes densités et couleurs, elle apprécie en particulier les très belles pierres roses d'Irbid et le magnifique marbre vert de Daba (60 kms au sud d'Amman). Beaucoup de ses œuvres ont été exposées en 1995 à Darat al Funun dans le cadre d'une rétrospective Mona Saudi, ainsi que dans une récente exposition de sculptures et de dessins inspirés par le poème d'Adonis Les Tableaux de Pétra.

«Malgré l'effort et le temps qu'implique mon travail, je sens que je dois continuer sur cette voie «classique et délicate», confie-t-elle. Tout en les respectant, elle ne se sent pas attirée par les matériaux et



Mona Saudi dans son atelier

formes ultramodernes de type installation. Son rêve, c'est de réaliser plusieurs sculptures monumentales pour Amman. «Avec dix sculptures, l'aspect de la ville changerait complètement», pense-t-elle.

Invitée à s'exprimer sur la situation actuelle de l'art jordanien, Mona Saudi ne se considère pas en mesure de l'évaluer. «C'est l'histoire et le temps qui filent la quantité de la qualité, le bon ou mauvais. Pour le moment, toutes les contributions, grandes ou petites, ne peuvent qu'aider au progrès général», avance-t-elle prudemment.

Le fait que l'art jordanien se trouve encore au début du chemin n'est pas un secret. De son point de vue, pour qu'il mûrisse, il a besoin d'un fort mouvement collectif et d'une véritable école des Beaux-Arts, ainsi que d'un important musée d'archéologie et d'un musée d'art moderne. «Si mon aide ou opinion est souhaitée, je suis prête à participer à la réalisation de ces projets», ajoute-t-elle calmement.

Comme exemple de «professionnalisme et de sélectivité», elle remarque l'effet catalyseur de l'activité de Darat al Funun sur la vie artistique jor-

dannienne des années 90. La maison d'Abdouh de Mona Saudi sera, elle, aussi peut-être un centre de sculpture ou un petit musée. L'artiste pense la donner un jour à sa ville natale.

Depuis trente-deux ans, le modus vivendi de Mona Saudi est de «glorifier la vie et la terre» par l'art.

«C'est une grande satisfaction de vivre constamment avec des projets créatifs», dit-elle. «Je ne travaille pas pour en faire une exposition, je travaille tout court. C'est ma vie.»

Auca de Maio

Spectacle

Un mime à même de se faire aimer

Avec leur spectacle Mime et Tysme, Thierry et Hélène Deschaumes ont séduit les spectateurs d'Amman, Irbid et Aqaba. Grâce aux gestes et à la musique, ils ont réussi à plonger le public dans un environnement fantaisiste et dynamique.

Avant de se lancer dans le mime, il était musicien et s'intéressait au théâtre classique. De son côté, elle aimait la mise en scène et venait de terminer des études de publicitaire. Et aujourd'hui, Thierry et Hélène Deschaumes forment un couple de grand talent. Le passage à l'art muet représente le fruit d'une volonté commune. «J'ai toujours aimé le côté gestuel car il me permet d'exprimer plus de choses qu'avec les paroles», explique Thierry Deschaumes.

Depuis dix ans, tous deux montent des spectacles de mime qu'ils présentent dans le monde entier, en proposant aux

différents public: une façon originale de vivre une représentation théâtrale. «Un mime, c'est un artiste spécialisé qui est capable de se mettre dans la peau de n'importe quel personnage. Il a pour mission de communiquer avec le public, de faire rire, en s'assurant que le public passe un bon moment. C'est pour cela que notre spectacle s'adresse à tous les publics», ajoute Thierry.

Dans le cadre de la semaine française organisée par le Centre culturel français, Thierry Deschaumes s'est produit cinq fois en Jordanie. Irbid faisait partie de sa tournée jordanienne, où il a proposé un spectacle d'une heure et quart mêlant à la fois humour et

dynamisme.

Sur scène, Thierry Deschaumes a mimé à l'aide de gestes et d'expressions du visage des attitudes de tous les jours. «La vie quotidienne, avec ses soucis et ses joies, est notre thème principal d'inspiration. Nous créons autour des sketches fantaisistes, mais toujours d'une manière assez simple», explique-t-il.

De son côté, Hélène est chargée de rythmer les sketches grâce à des musiques et des bruitages, en cherchant à trouver une harmonie entre le geste et le son. «Entre nous et le public, il y a un travail de complicité», explique Hélène.

«Quand il reçoit un moment où on le souhaite, j'ai l'impression

que l'on se connaît depuis déjà longtemps».

Les applaudissements qui ont accompagné leur représentation témoignent du succès obtenu auprès du public d'Irbid.

«Au début, je pensais que cela serait ennuyant. Mais au bout de quelques instants, je me suis laissé prendre par le spectacle», explique Jalal Tamimi, étudiant à l'université d'Irbid.

Une grande majorité du public assistait pour la première fois à un tel spectacle qui permet d'éviter complètement l'ostacole de la langue. «Il a très bien réussi à communiquer avec nous. Cette bonne communication repose sur la synchronisation entre les gestes et la musique», commente une autre étudiante.

Cette représentation très inventive a aussi donné de bonnes idées à certains spectateurs. «C'était vraiment époustouflant», déclare Mohammed Nassar, professeur de théâtre à l'Université du Yarmouk.

«Nous faisons nous-mêmes du mime avec nos étudiants, et nous avons beaucoup appris aujourd'hui grâce à ce spectacle.»

Nahed Al-Khlouf



Thierry Deschaumes sur la scène du théâtre des jardins du roi Abdallah à Amman.

Droits de l'Homme

Un premier programme national

A l'issue d'une conférence consacrée aux droits de l'Homme en Jordanie, un programme national a été adopté. Celui-ci a pour but de permettre aux Jordaniens de mieux jouir de leurs droits.

Pour la première

fois depuis l'adoption du processus démocratique en Jordanie fin 89, un colloque s'est intéressé à une dizaine de jours à Amman aux différents aspects de la question des droits de l'Homme dans le royaume hachémite. Simple «incident», le même jour que celui de son inauguration, le nouveau code de la presse était rendu public.

Durant deux jours, les aspects historiques et juridiques ainsi que les droits politiques, civils, économiques, sociaux et culturels ont été étudiés par une cinquantaine de personnes. Les droits de la femme, de l'enfant, des partis politiques et de la justice, ainsi que le renforcement de ces droits, ont fait l'objet de discussions intéressantes. Ce colloque était conjointement organisé par le Centre d'études de l'Université du Yarmouk et le centre d'études Riada d'Amman.

Ces discussions ont débouché sur l'adoption d'un «programme national pour la promotion des droits de l'Homme en Jordanie». «Le développement de la démocratie passe nécessairement par la réforme de la Constitution», affirme ce document. Le premier

en son genre. Le programme dresse une série de lois dont certaines articles entravent ces droits: les lois sur les élections, sur les publications, sur les prisons, sur le statut personnel de la femme, sur le travail... Le programme exige la levée de certaines réserves formulées par le gouvernement jordanien lors de la ratification de certaines conventions internationales, concernant notamment l'égalité entre hommes et femmes. L'adoption d'une loi sur le droit des enfants a elle aussi été réclamée. Et dans le domaine judiciaire, des réformes importantes s'imposent pour permettre au citoyen jordanien de disposer de tous ses droits.

L'objectif de ce colloque était de répondre clairement à une question: le processus démocratique lancé fin 1989

avance-t-il, ou bien, comme le prétendent certains, effectue-t-il actuellement un retour en arrière. Pour beaucoup de participants, ce processus a connu des hauts et des bas, avant d'enclencher la marche arrière après la signature du traité de paix avec Israël.

L'adoption dans le même temps du code sur la presse et la publication est venue compliquer cette réponse plutôt négative. Et peut-être la clôture de cette conférence, une trentaine de participants ont envoyé un télégramme au Premier ministre jordanien Abdel Salem Majali pour lui demander d'abroger cette loi qui constitue «une atteinte à la liberté d'expression et à celle de la presse.»

Suleiman Sweiss

C'est la vie

L'agenda français d'Amman

Cinéma

Fin du cycle consacré au réalisateur Claude Sautet. Le 2 juin à 20h30 au CCCL, Max et les ferrailleurs (1974).

Exposition

L'artiste Guy Ferrer présente ses œuvres (sculptures et tableaux) au CCCL jusqu'au 19 juin 1997.

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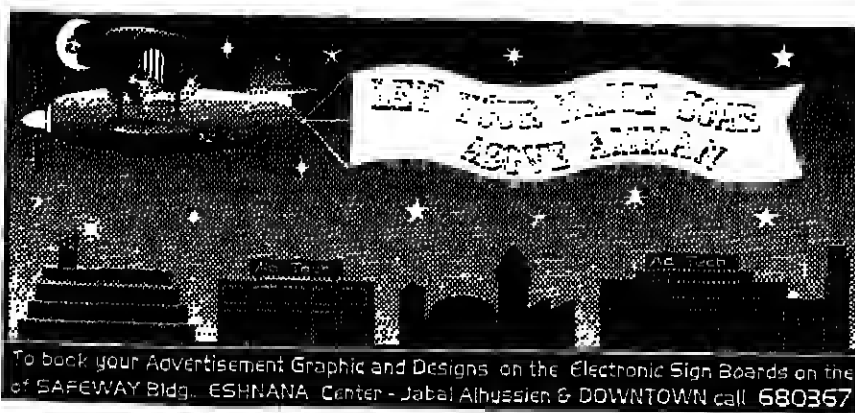
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THE STAR'S WORKSTATION COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Edited by Zeid Nasser

The new system for Top Level Domains Why the changes were necessary

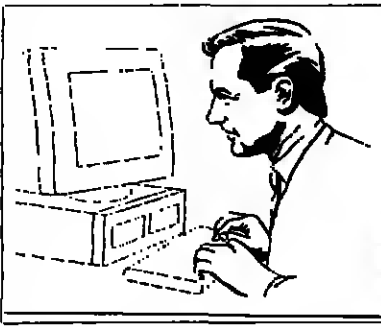
By Jawad Abbassi
Special to The Star

THE FIRST article on the new system for Top Level Domains gave an overview of the changes to be made. This final article will outline the reasons for the new system and how it will eliminate, or greatly reduce, the pitfalls of the older registration system monopolized by the Network Services Inc.

One of the most serious pitfalls of the older system has been the "stealing" of well-known names—trademarks and commercial names—in top level domains. The culprits in these cases are usually individuals or firms that hope to benefit from the usurpation of a famous name by selling the domain name back to its rightful owner. To remedy this, the new system, as stipulated by the memorandum of understanding signed at the conference hosted by the International Telecommunication Union, will setup international independent panels of experts administered by the World Intellectual Property Organization to look into, and decide, domain name disputes. The World Intellectual Property

Organization is a Geneva based organization already in charge of worldwide protection of patents, trademarks and copyright. In effect, the new system extends the jurisdiction of this organization into Cyber space.

Another pitfall of the old sys-



tem was of a more technical nature: with the NSI's monopolizing the registration of generic top level domains, some other organizations tried to create their own generic top level domains and propagate them along the domain name servers of the Internet. Such "rogue registries" threatened to undermine the stability and reliability of the Internet name space. It shouldn't be surprising to know that one of these rogue top level

domains was—and what else—"sex".

The important implication of the adopted "gTLD-MOU" stems from the fact that the greatest players on the Internet scene—such as MCI, France Telecom, UUNET and many others—pledged to or already signed it. This means that an effective end to the pitfall of the older system is not only possible but inevitable. The major proposals in the MOU that will establish the new system can be summed up by the following:

■ The generic Top Level Domains will be considered as public trust and dealt with accordingly.

■ The 28 registrars will be selected on a world wide basis by lottery among applicants that meet objective technical and business criteria.

■ Administrative Domain Name Challenge Panels will be responsible for arbitration and

Stating that 15,000 PCs were sold in Jordan last year and that the market is growing: Microsoft sets its sights on Jordan

Microsoft®

IN A visit to Jordan, earlier this month, Mr. Ahmad Chemi, general manager of Microsoft Middle East, stated that Jordan was a market that Microsoft was seriously pursuing.

According to Mr. Chemi, 15,000 computer systems were sold in Jordan last year, making the country an appealing growth market. Accordingly, Microsoft is seeking to build an effective structure of distribution and sales channels in Jordan.

This will be achieved by the appointment of official, authorized dealers who will be well-equipped to handle software support and services through Microsoft's support.

Also, regular seminars and lectures will be held in Jordan

to keep local distributors up-to-date and to maintain continued development of their skills, which are passed onto customers in the form of quality service.

Commenting on intellectual property rights, Mr. Chemi called on the Jordanian Government to battle piracy and said that Microsoft would introduce a Hot Line plan in the country by which citizens would be able to inform officials of copyright violations, in return for rewards.

Regarding Microsoft's upcoming products, Mr. Chemi

announced that Arabic Microsoft Office 97 would be available in Jordan soon and so would the Arabic version of Windows NT 4.0.

Additionally, he said that Windows 97 (English version) would be introduced in the Jordanian market before the end of this year.

These announcements are in line with Microsoft's commitment to introduce the latest products in the Jordanian market simultaneously with the official launch of these products.

INTERFACE BY ZEID NASSER

The attack of Mac compatibles

WELL, IF you've been an Apple Macintosh user for many years, who has suffered from the flood of IBM PCs & Compatibles, you will be very pleased to know that Apple's decision to license its Macintosh operating system has delivered the required result.

Already, there are four major suppliers of Macintosh compatibles, and the machines are true to the original. In other words, they maintain perfect compatibility, due to a strict set of standards set by Apple in terms of hardware and software.

These Macintosh compatibles are produced by Motorola, Power Computing, UMAX and Day Star.

Comparisons between the latest models of these compatibles, based around the Apple Quadra 950, have shown similar results.

Moving away from the top configured machines, the range of Macintosh compatibles provided by each company has its own characteristics. For example, Power Computing tends to offer computers that are multi-purpose systems, with a lot of options and reasonable speeds.

While UMAX and Motorola are targeting power users, in keeping with both their reputations for intensive application solutions. In any case, all these developments are good news for Macintosh users. It may mean the wide spread use of Macintosh-based computers, to at least slightly challenge the IBM PC Compatibles standard (based on Intel processors and running Windows). For now, it seems unclear who in Jordan is offering each of the above mentioned brands. So far, we have been informed that Ideal Systems is the distributor for Power Computing systems, and possibly Al Nasir Technical Services would know if and when the UMAX Mac-compatibles will be available in Jordan. Motorola computers, which are mainly servers, are represented in Jordan by Computer & Engineering Bureau (CEB), who would also be the company to ask about Motorola's Mac-compatibles.

So, accordingly, we might see the Mac-compatibles present in the Jordanian market. It should be interesting to see how these machines will be priced. In fact, by the time they get to Jordan, they may not be priced competitively at all. The traditional sectors in Jordan which utilize Macintosh computers—design, prepress and printing—would definitely be interested in brands other than Apple. For now, it would be safe to adopt the attitude of "better late than never" to herald in the over-postponed arrival of Mac compatibles. Who knows, maybe they will hold the answers to Apple's troubles.

Arabic Music, through the Web!

ACCORDING TO a report in *BYTE Middle East*, there are several sites of the World Wide Web that offer samples of Arabic music!

These mainly offer the works of Arabic music's greats like Um Kulthum, Fairouz, Marcel Khalifeh, Abdel Halim Hafiz and others. Such sites represent a positive reflection of what the Internet can do for the cause of spreading Arabic culture, part of which is contemporary music works.

Artists featured on these sites are known worldwide, but having them on the Internet means that their legacy will be carried into a next generation of techno-minded youngsters. In any case, if you would like to check some of these sites for yourself, here are some addresses:

- <http://almashriq.hio.no/egypt/700/780/>
- umkulthum/am-kulthum.html
- <http://oregano.wustl.edu/~ahed/htdocs/audio.html>
- <http://almashriq.hio.no/general/700/780/>

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Rounding up the world of soccer

By Alex Johnson

Brazil: Like it or not, Gremio delivers the goods. The club, as well-known for its collection of red cards and suspensions as for its collection of titles, added another Copa Brasil (Brazilian Cup) to its trophy chest last week, tying Flamengo 2-2 to win the cup on road goals (the first game at Gremio's stadium in Porto Alegre ended scoreless). It's the third cup for Gremio since 1989 and the fourth straight year it has won a major title, to go with the 1994 Copa Brasil, the 1995 Libertadores Cup and the 1996 Brazilian championship.

Mexico: Toros Neza stormed back from a 2-1 deficit in the first game with a 3-1 victory over the weekend to eliminate Necaxa 4-3 on total goals in the Mexican semifinals. That means Neza plays Guadalajara for the summer championship this week after Guadalajara's 1-0 win over Morelia evened their series at 1-1; since the Mexican league doesn't use tiebreakers, that's how it ended, and Guadalajara advances because it finished ahead of Morelia in the standings. Neza's home game is Wednesday, with the return in Guadalajara on Sunday.

UEFA Cup: Schalke 04 won the UEFA Cup, its first European trophy ever, last week when it beat heavily favored Internazionale of Milan in a penalty-kick tie-

breaker. The final had ended 1-1 on total goals. Schalke was six minutes from winning the cup in regulation, nursing a 1-0 lead from the first game in Gelsenkirchen, when Inter's Ivan Zamorano scored off a throw-in to force extra time, which ended scoreless.

After the game, Inter coach Roy Hodgson, who was already leaving at the end of the season to return to England, resigned effective immediately. Club President Massimo Moratti asked Hodgson to reconsider, but he reportedly refused. Inter can still qualify for the European Champions League by finishing second in Serie A, and with the club in third place with one game left, Hodgson's resignation comes at an extremely awkward time.

"I'm sorry that the fans consider Hodgson the guilty party," Moratti said. "...I know Hodgson well. He doesn't deserve such a mortification."

Belarus: Belshyna Bobruisk beat Dinamo-93 Minsk 2-0 in Minsk to win the Belarusian Cup. The final was scoreless until Vasily Smirnykh and Dmitry Balashov both scored in the last eight minutes.

Belgium: Outsiders Lierse won its first league title in 37 years over the weekend, beating Standard Liege 3-0 to clinch first place.

England: Graeme Souness resigned as coach of Southampton over the weekend



Stefano Eranio

after less than a year in charge. For Souness, who just managed to avoid relegation on the last day of the season, it's the second managerial flop in England; he was forced out at Liverpool several years ago after failing to duplicate predecessor Kenny Dalglish's success. Most recently, Galatasaray of Turkey fired him just last year even though he won the Turkish Cup. Reports from both England and Italy have Souness moving down to the Italian Second Division to try to rebuild his reputation with Torino.

Italian international midfielder Stefano

Eranio will join Premier League Derby County next season. AC Milan, preparing for a massive shakeup after its disappointing season, decided not to offer Eranio, who won his 30th cap last month, a new deal when his contract expires at the end of the season.

France: Eric Cantona's lawyer said last week that the Manchester United star retired because he knew he would not be in the national team for next year's World Cup final round. National team coach Aimé Jacquet, who dropped Cantona from the team in 1995, is presumed to believe that he has better players than Cantona to choose from, although he has always been careful to praise Cantona, who is still odds-on the most popular player with the French public. Bertrand comments tend to bear out speculation that Cantona had no differences with United and walked away from the game rather than be humiliated by being rejected for a World Cup in his home country. "Jacquet has left Eric no hope," Bertrand said. United is not convinced that Cantona means business. It's continuing to pay his \$23,000-a-week salary on the presumption that he'll show up for preseason training in July.

Germany: Bayern Munich clinched its record 14th title over the weekend when it beat VfB Stuttgart 4-2. With one game left, Bayern leads Bayer Leverkusen by four points after Leverkusen was crushed by Cologne 4-0. For Coach Giovanni Trapattoni, who has had a rocky year and a half at Bayern, the title is the 18th league or cup trophy he's won in his coaching career.

Holland: PSV Eindhoven won the Dutch title over the weekend by beating Willem II Tilburg 3-1. It's PSV's 14th championship, but the first since 1992, when Ajax began its dominance of Dutch soccer. Feyenoord beat Heerenveen 4-2 to solidify its hold on second place, which would put it in the Champions League.

Italy: Juventus, the best soccer team in the world, clinched its 24th championship last week. A 1-1 draw at Atalanta put first place out of reach of the rest of Serie A. Since 1994, the Turin club has won two league titles, the European Cup, the Intercontinental Cup, the European Supercup, the Italian Supercup and the Italian Cup. It will likely win its second European title on Wednesday.

Russia: In a significant upset, Krylya Sovetov Samara beat Rotor Volgograd 1-0 in the Russian Cup quarterfinals last week. That sets up a semifinal this week against Lokomotiv Moscow, who beat cross-town rivals Torpedo 2-1. The other semifinal is a dream matchup between Dynamo Moscow and Zenit St. Petersburg. The final is June 11 in Moscow.

Scotland: Kilmarnock won the Scottish



A draw between Sweden and Poland

Cup 1-0 over Falkirk in Glasgow over the weekend. The cup is Kilmarnock's first since 1929 and its first major trophy of any sort since it won its only Scottish title 32 years ago. Fears about low attendance at only the seventh cup final since 1957 without either Rangers or Celtic proved unfounded: almost 49,000 spectators turned out at Rangers' Ibrox stadium. Kilmarnock's success this season earned coach Bobby Williamson a new three-year contract a few days before the final.

Spain: The coronation of Real Madrid may not take place after all. Real was upset 1-0 by Athletic Bilbao over the weekend to reopen the championship race. With the loss, Real, once a seemingly invincible nine points ahead of the league, has seen its lead shrink to only two points over Barcelona with three games to play. With Barcelona playing as well as it has been, you almost have to favor it for the title.

Switzerland: No surprises in the Swiss Cup semifinals: Lucerne beat Schaffhouse 2-1 and Sion clubbed Fribourg 5-2 last week. Their final is June 8.

Ukraine: Shakhtar Donetsk became one of the rare Ukrainian clubs to wrest a trophy away from Dynamo Kiev over the weekend when it beat Dnipro Dnepropetrovsk 1-0 in the Ukraine Cup final. An impressive crowd of 30,000 saw the game in Kiev.

Australia: The Brisbane Strikers won the championship over the weekend with a 2-0 victory over Sydney United in the Grand Final. An Australian soccer record crowd of 40,446 turned out for the final in Brisbane, in which Brisbane player-coach Frank Farina, a veteran of several European clubs, scored the winner.

Iran: The Asian confederation suspended Farhad Falsafi and Naeim Samavi of FC Piruzi for a year after they tested positive for steroids during the Asian Club Championships in Malaysia in March. The suspensions are the first since the confederation reformulated its testing procedures after three Saudi national team players tested positive at the Asian Cup in December but escaped punishment because of faulty testing procedures.

South Africa: The national team threatened to go on strike hours before last weekend's exhibition against England in Manchester, holding out for more money. South African officials accused the players of being "greedy and mercenary" and said their demands jeopardized youth development in the country, to which the federation had hoped to direct the proceeds of the game. In the end, they gave in, upping the players' appearance fee by a total of about \$200,000, complaining that the deal meant the federation would lose money on the game. In a statement, the federation said, "We now face the dilemma of having to cancel future international engagements because the match fee will not cover the excessive demands of the players." England won 2-1.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Dortmund coach says 'Golden Goal' rule unfair

MUNICH, Germany—Borussia Dortmund coach Ottmar Hitzfeld said Tuesday he did not agree with the principle of sudden death in Wednesday's European Cup final against Juventus.

If the match is not decided after 90 minutes, the first team to score in extra time will win the trophy, the first time the "Golden Goal" rule has been used in the world's most prestigious club competition.

The rule was introduced for the first time at a major event during last year's European championship finals in England. But even though the Germans beat the Czech Republic in the Euro 96 final with a

"Golden Goal," coach Bero Vogts said the rule was not fair. Hitzfeld said: "I agree with Berti Vogts that it's unfair. One mistake and things can change within seconds. You don't get a chance to make up for an error like you do when you can concentrate on playing 30 minutes."

The Germans are bidding to win the European Cup for the first time in contrast to holders Juventus who have won the competition twice and have much more international experience than their opponents.

The last time the two teams met in a European final was in the 1993 UEFA Cup when Juventus destroyed the Ger-

mans 6-1 on aggregate. Hitzfeld acknowledged that his team were the underdogs for the final in Munich's Olympic stadium but said he was looking for inspiration from the 1983 final when Hamburg upset the Italians 1-0 in Athens, the last time a German club won the trophy.

"I remember that well with that great goal from Felix Magath. That is something for us to look up to," Hitzfeld said. "It was a sensation in Athens. Hamburg were the outsiders then too and Juventus the favorites."

Despite their lack of experience in the European Cup final, Dortmund have an array of

internationals in their ranks, many of whom played an important part in both the German national team's 1990 World Cup triumph and last year's Euro 96 victory.

Wing back Reuter, who played for the former West Germany in the 1990 World Cup final, agreed that Dortmund had lost their top form in recent weeks in comparison to the brilliant performances from Juventus who clinched the Italian title last Friday.

But he added: "We haven't managed to play as well as we wanted to but we can lift ourselves for big games. The Germans have that ability."

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The
AMMAN

The Iraqis
Jordan

AFM:
How long
before the
bubble
bursts?

By Ilham Sadeq

Star Staff Writer
AN ACTIVITY that has
drawn the attention of
the Arab world is the
stock market in Amman.
After more than three
years of stagnation, the
stock market in Amman
has started to move.

For such a small market, the Arab world's stock market with over 100 companies listed, it is a very active one. The market has been moving up and down, but the overall trend is positive. The market has been moving up and down, but the overall trend is positive. The market has been moving up and down, but the overall trend is positive.

Disaster struck the AFM. With a sharp decline in the stock market, the AFM has been hit hard. The market has been moving up and down, but the overall trend is positive. The market has been moving up and down, but the overall trend is positive.

At the end of the day, the market has been hit hard. The market has been moving up and down, but the overall trend is positive. The market has been moving up and down, but the overall trend is positive.

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